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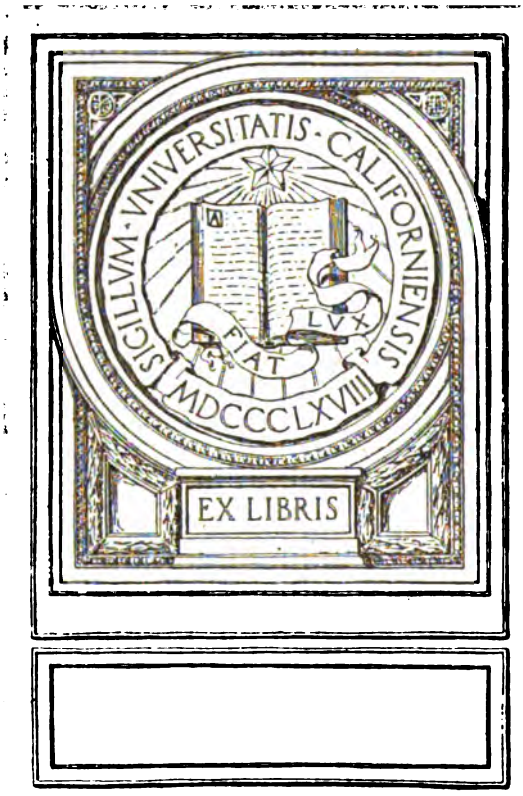
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THE WORKS

OF

JOHN ADAMS.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Mrs Adams
from a portrait by Gilbert Stuart

BOSTON
PUBLISHED BY LITTLE BROWN AND COMPANY

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.
1854.

Miss Adams.

from a Portrait by Gilbert Stuart

BOSTON
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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN ADAMS,

SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY

HIS GRANDSON

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

VOL. IX.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.
1854.

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LETTERS, MESSAGES,

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PUBLIC PAPERS

CONTINUED.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 23 July, 1799.

Sir, — Inclosed is a letter from Mr. Thaxter, relative to the light-house on Gay Head. I shall soon send you a drawing, if not a model, of an economical improvement of these lights, of Mr. Cunnington, which appears to me, but I may be mistaken, of greater importance than the great question, who shall be the keeper of one of them.

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 24 July, 1799.

Sir, — There is in the Aurora of this city an uninterrupted stream of slander on the American government. I inclose the paper of this morning. It is not the first time that the editor has suggested, that you had asserted the influence of the British government in affairs of our own, and insinuated that it was obtained by bribery. The general readers of the Aurora will believe both. I shall give the paper to Mr. Rawle, and, if he thinks it libellous, desire him to prosecute the editor.

I do not know a member concerned in the administration of the affairs of the United States, who would not indignantly spurn at the idea of British influence; and as to bribes, they would disdain to attempt a vindication from the charge.

The article in the paper, marked 5, of an acknowledgment in my writings, that in case of a war with Great Britain, a foreign war is not the only one to be dreaded, probably refers to my

letter of 12th September, 1795, to Mr. Monroe, in which, vindicating our state of neutrality and the British treaty, and exhibiting the evils to flow from a war with Great Britain, I say that in that case "it would be happy for us if we could contemplate only a foreign war, in which all hearts and hands might be united."

The editor of the Aurora, William Duane, pretends that he is an *American citizen*, saying that he was born in Vermont, but was, when a child, taken back with his parents to Ireland, where he was educated. But I understand the facts to be, that he went from America prior to our revolution, remained in the British dominions till after the peace, went to the British East Indies, where he committed or was charged with some crime, and returned to Great Britain, from whence, within three or four years past, he came to this country to stir up sedition and work other mischief. I presume, therefore, that he is really a British subject, and, as an alien, liable to be banished from the United States. He has lately set himself up to be the captain of a company of volunteers, whose distinguishing badges are a plume of *cock*-neck feathers and a *small* black cockade with a *large* eagle. He is doubtless a United Irishman, and the company is probably formed to oppose the authority of the government; and in case of war and invasion by the French, to join them.

I am, with great respect, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

TO J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 27 July, 1799.

SIR, — I have received your letter of the 20th, and have no objection to the plan you propose of raising a company of cavalry. "Our means!"[1] I never think of our means without shuddering. All the declamations, as well as demonstrations, of Trenchard and Gordon, Bolingbroke, Barnard and Walpole,

[1] Mr. McHenry, speaking in his letter of the delay to raise six additional companies of cavalry, says;

"I have been influenced, also, to this delay by a desire to husband our means, and guard against interrupting recruiting for the infantry."

In reality he had been stirred to act by a letter from Mr. Hamilton, shaping the policy suggested. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. v. pp. 275, 276.

Hume, Burgh and Burke, rush upon my memory and frighten me out of my wits. The system of debts and taxes is levelling all governments in Europe. We have a career to run, to be sure, and some time to pass before we arrive at the European crisis; but we must ultimately go the same way. There is no practicable or imaginable expedient to escape it, that I can conceive.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 1 August, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 24th of July, inclosing an Aurora of July 24th, imbued with rather more impudence than is common to that paper. Is there any thing evil in the regions of actuality or possibility, that the Aurora has not suggested of me? You may depend upon it, I disdain to attempt a vindication of myself against any of the lies of the Aurora, as much as any man concerned in the administration of the affairs of the United States. If Mr. Rawle does not think this paper libellous, he is not fit for his office; and if he does not prosecute it, he will not do his duty.

The matchless effrontery of this Duane merits the execution of the alien law. I am very willing to try its strength upon him.

JOHN ADAMS.

T. PICKERING TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

Philadelphia, 1 August, 1799.

SIR, — The day before yesterday I received from Mr. Charles Hall, of Northumberland county, in this State, a letter concerning a publication by Thomas Cooper, an Englishman, and a connection of Dr. Priestley, addressed to the readers of the Sunbury and Northumberland Gazette, on the 29th of June.[1] This

[1] This publication is found, together with all the proceedings in the trial to which it gave rise, in Wharton's *State Trials during the Administrations of Washington and Adams*, a work of great value to the history of that period.

address has been republished in the Aurora of July 12th, which I now inclose.

By Mr. Hall's information, Cooper was a barrister in England, and, like Dr. Priestley, a chemist, and a warm opposition man. Dr. Priestley was at the *democratic* assembly on the 4th of July, at Northumberland. But what is of most consequence, and demonstrates the Doctor's want of decency, being an alien, his discontented and turbulent spirit, that will never be quiet under the freest government on earth, is "his industry in getting Mr. Cooper's address printed in handbills, and distributed." "This," Mr. Hall adds, "is a circumstance capable of the fullest proof." Cooper has taken care to get himself admitted to citizenship. I am sorry for it; for those who are desirous of maintaining our internal tranquillity must wish them both removed from the United States.

It is near a year since you authorized the expulsion of General Collot and one Schweitzer. Colonel Mentges, who was engaged (while I was at Trenton) in getting information of Schweitzer's *names* and conduct, kept me long in suspense until at length he informed me that *General Serrurier* was in the country in disguise. I then thought it best not to give an alarm to him by arresting the other two. But after months of suspense, while inquiry was making, I was satisfied the information concerning Serrurier was groundless. Then so many months had elapsed, and the session of Congress commenced, when other business pressed, the pursuit of these aliens was overlooked. Colonel Mentges now informs me that Schweitzer is about to embark for Hamburgh; but Collot remains, and is deemed as much as ever disposed to do all the mischief in his power. He remains a prisoner of war to the British; and it would seem desirable to compel him to place himself under their jurisdiction, where he could do no harm.

M. Letombe not only exercises those services, which, on the withdrawing of his *exequatur*, he requested permission to render to his fellow-citizens in this country, but assumes and uses the title of *Consul-General of the French Republic*, just as he did formerly. He held the purse-strings of the republic in this country, and paid the bribes ordered by the French Minister Adet; the minister being gone, he is probably vested with powers adequate to the object. With much softness of manners, he

is capable of submitting to, and doing, any thing corruptly which his government should direct.

The reiterated observations, that the alien law remains a dead letter, have induced me in this manner to bring the subject under your notice; and, waiting the expression of your will, I remain, most respectfully, yours, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

P. S. A prosecution against Duane, editor of the Aurora, has been instituted, on the charge of English secret-service money distributed in the United States; and I have desired Mr. Rawle to examine his newspaper and to institute new prosecutions as often as he offends. This, I hope, will meet with your approbation.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 3 August, 1799.

SIR, — I have received a long letter from Mr. Gerry of the 24th of July, with papers inclosed, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, besides another paper of extracts of letters. I inclose extracts of his letter, together with all the numbers, and his paper of extracts. These numbers and last extracts I pray you to return to me, when you have made all the uses of them you wish.

These papers, I think, will convince you as they have me, of three points.

1. That Mr. Gerry's stay in France, after the receipt of your letter by Mr. Humphreys, and especially after the publication of the despatches, was not gratuitous, but of indispensable and unavoidable necessity under the paws of arbitrary power, and therefore that his salary ought to be allowed him according to his account.

2. That Mr. Gerry ought not to be charged with the ships' stores, or any part of them. I am ashamed to make any remarks on this head, and shall not do it unless driven to the necessity of it. If the necessities of our country require that we should order our ambassadors to take passages in small vessels, with all the sea captains and mariners that can be collected, I think a generous provision of articles in case of sickness and putrid fevers ought not to be charged to the ambassador.

3. That the guilders ought not to be charged at forty cents. This point, however, I may mistake. I should be obliged to you for information. I wish right may be done according to law at the time the debt was contracted. Upon the whole, it is my opinion that Mr. Gerry's account, as stated by himself, ought to be allowed.[1]

I am, Sir, with all due respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 4 August, 1799.

SIR, — The inclosed protest and certificates I received last night, with the letter from Captain Ebenezer Giles, late commander of the schooner Betsey. This gentleman made me a visit some weeks ago, to complain to me in person of the horrid treatment he received from the commander of the ship Daphne, a British vessel of war. He has now sent me the papers, and expects that government will espouse his cause. I think the papers should be communicated to Mr. Liston, and sent to Mr. King.[2] There is a very sour leaven of malevolence in many English and in many American minds against each other, which has given and will continue to give trouble to both governments; but by patience and perseverance I hope we shall succeed in wearing it out, and in bringing the people on both sides to treat each other like friends.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 5 August, 1799.

Your two letters of the 29th, and one of the 30th July, are before me. I know not who are meant by G. and C. in Cap-

[1] Mr. Adams's interference was necessary to check the petty vexations to which Mr. Pickering's hostility was subjecting Mr. Gerry. It was not, however, effective until Mr. Marshall came into office. Austin's *Life of Gerry*, vol. ii. p. 277, note.

[2] Mr. Pickering replied on the 16th by transmitting a letter, written by him to the complainant, in which he quoted Captain Truxtun's statement of the transaction to prove that Captain Giles deserved the beating he got on board of the English frigate. He therefore declined making any application to Mr. Liston.

tain Perry's letter; but I think there ought to be some inquiry into the justice of his insinuations. I fear that the officers and crew of the General Greene were too long on shore at the Havana, and there caught the infection which has obliged him to leave his station and bury so many. The news, however, of the politeness and friendship of the governor and admiral is not the less pleasing. I return you Captain Perry's letter. Although I am very solicitous to strike some strokes in Europe for the reasons detailed in your letter proposing the expedition, yet I feel the whole force of the importance of deciding all things in the West Indies, if possible, and therefore shall consent to the alteration you propose, if you continue to think it necessary.

There is one alteration in our policy, which appears to me indispensable. Instead of sending the prisoners we take, back into Guadaloupe, there to embark again in the first privateer, we must send them all to the United States, or allow them to work and fight on board our ships. At least, if any are returned, their written parole ought to be taken, that they will not serve until exchanged. One suggestion more. I like your plan of employing all our great frigates on separate stations. I have more ideas in my head on this subject than I am willing to commit to writing. One idea more. I think we must have Bermuda sloops, Virginia pilot boats, or Marblehead schooners, or whaleboats, in one word, some very light small fast-sailing vessels, furnished with oars as well as sails, to attend our frigates, and pursue the French pirates in among their own rocks and shoals to their utter destruction. Talbot's unwarrantable suspicion of your want of confidence in him shall never be any disadvantage to you. Indeed, I believe I ought not to have let you see that anxious expression of a brave man. I know his opinion of you to be very high as a man of talents and business.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 5 August, 1799.

I have received your favor of July 30th, inclosing Mr. King's letter of 5th June, which I return. There is not a question in

mathematics or physics, not the square of the circle or the universal menstruum, which gives me less solicitude or inquietude than the negotiations with Russia and the Porte. Mr. King's official assurances induced me to nominate the missions, and if there has been any thing hasty in the business, it was Mr. King's haste. I know that both Russia and the Porte have as much interest in the connections proposed, as we have, and that the stiff and stately formalities about it are exactly such as France has practised upon us these twenty years. The object is to assume the air of granting favors, when they receive them, and to make the American government and people believe they are not yet independent and can do nothing of themselves. If we are retarded at all, it will be owing to the artifices of intermeddlers, and instead of having one farthing of money the less to pay, I know it will cost us more.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 6 August, 1799.

Sir, — I received late last evening your favor of the 31st of July, inclosing a triplicate of Mr. Murray's letter of the 17th of May, and a copy, certified by Mr. Murray, on the 18th of May, of a letter of Charles Maurice Talleyrand, dated Paris, le 23e Floréal de l'an 7 de la République Française une et indivisible.

Sovereign to sovereign, and minister to minister, is a maxim in the cabinets of Europe, and although neither the President of the United States, nor the executive Directory, are sovereigns in their countries, the same relations exist between them and their ministers, and, therefore, the reason of the maxim is applicable to them. It is far below the dignity of the President of the United States to take any notice of Talleyrand's impertinent regrets, and insinuations of superfluities.[1] You or Mr. Murray

[1] In transmitting these papers, Mr. Pickering had remarked; —

"The answer, I observe, does not exactly conform to the terms used in the instructions to M. Murray, and which he repeated in his letter of May 5th to the minister. But Mr. Talleyrand does not forget the common practice of his government, to drop a reproach or insult while making amicable professions. It was certainly not necessary for him to insinuate that the President of the United States was wasting many months of precious time for 'the simple confirmation,' that if new envoys were sent they would be received."

may answer them as you please in your correspondence with one another, or with the French minister. I will say to you, however, that I consider this letter as the most authentic intelligence yet received in America of the successes of the coalition. That the design is insidious and hostile at heart, I will not say.[1] Time will tell the truth. Meantime, I dread no longer their diplomatic skill. I have seen it, and felt it, and been the victim of it these twenty-one years. But the charm is dissolved. Their magic is at an end in America. Still, they shall find, as long as I am in office, candor, integrity, and, as far as there can be any confidence or safety, a pacific and friendly disposition. If the spirit of exterminating vengeance ever arises, it shall be conjured up by them, not me. In this spirit I shall pursue the negotiation, and I expect[2] the coöperation of the heads of departments. Our operations and preparations by sea and land are not to be relaxed in the smallest degree. On the contrary, I wish them to be animated with fresh energy. St. Domingo and the Isle of France, and all other parts of the French dominions, are to be treated in the same manner as if no negotiation was going on. These preliminaries recollected, I pray you to lose no time in conveying to Governor Davie his commission, and to the Chief Justice and his Excellency, copies of these letters from Mr. Murray and Talleyrand, with a request that, laying aside all other employments, they make immediate preparations for embarking. Whether together or asunder, from a northern, a southern, or a middle port, I leave to them. I am willing to send Truxtun, or Barry, or Talbot, with them; consult the Secretary of the Navy and heads of department on this point. Although I have little confidence in the issue of this business, I wish to delay nothing, to omit nothing.

The principal points, indeed, all the points of the negotiation, were so minutely considered and approved by me and all the heads of department, before I left Philadelphia, that nothing remains but to put them into form and dress. This service I pray you to perform as promptly as possible. Lay your draught before the heads of department, receive their corrections, if

[1] So in the copy-book. Mr. Gibbs in his work has the word *deny*, and prints the sentence in small capitals. *Memoirs of the Fed. Adm.* vol. ii. p. 250.

[2] Printed, *request*, by Mr. Gibbs. There are other variations of less consequence.

they shall judge any to be necessary, and send them to me as soon as possible. My opinions and determinations on these subjects are so well made up, at least to my own satisfaction, that not many hours will be necessary for me to give you my ultimate sentiments concerning the matter or form of the instructions to be given to the envoys.[1]

I have the honor, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 8 August, 1799.

SIR, — I received last night your favor of the 2d of this month. I am sincerely sorry for the resignation of Captain Truxtun. Although you have not explained to me his motives, I presume the decision, which gave rise to them, was founded in principles of sound policy and eternal justice, as it was made upon honor and with conscientious deliberation. If it were now to be made, it would be the same, though my son or my father were in the place of Captain Truxtun. I have no more to say. If we lose Captain Truxtun[2], we shall soon regain Captain Dale. Meantime I am very desirous that Captain Decatur should take the Constellation. If, however, he prefers the merchants' frigate, as you call her, I will not urge him from his bias. Of Captain Barron I know very little, but repose myself with great confidence upon your judgment. I now request of you that Barry and Talbot may be separated. I have reasons for this, which it is unnecessary to detail. Not from any misunderstanding or dislike between them that I know of or suspect, but it is best the great frigates should have separate stations.

[1] This letter is remarkable as containing a summary of the President's policy on this point, so sharply contested by his three cabinet officers; a policy from which the result will show him not to have varied in any essential particular from beginning to end.

[2] Captain Truxtun did not resign. He served throughout the period of this administration, and was edged out rather than resigned, in 1802. A brief notice of his life is given in Mr. Cooper's *History of the Navy*, vol. i. p. 354, note. A characteristic letter upon the causes of his quitting the service is found in *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 533 – 535.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 13 August, 1799.

And now, Sir, what shall I say to you on the subject of "libels and satires? Lawless things, indeed!" I have received your private letter of the 1st of this month,[1] and considered the subject of it as fully as the pressure of other business of more importance would allow me time to do. Of Priestley and Cooper I will say no more at present than to relate to you two facts.

Anecdote first. Dr. Priestley's old friend, and my old acquaintance, Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, the celebrated M. P., soon after his arrival in Boston, came up to Quincy with his lady on a visit to us, who had visited his family in London. I was absent. They dined with Mrs. Adams, and in the course of conversation Mr. Vaughan told her that Mr. Cooper was a rash man, and had led Dr. Priestley into all his errors in England, and he feared would lead him into others in America.

Anecdote the second. At the time when we were inquiring for an agent to conduct the affairs of the United States before the commissioners at Philadelphia, Mr. Cooper wrote to me a solicitation for that appointment, and Dr. Priestley wrote me a letter, strongly recommending him. Both made apologies for his reputation as a democrat, and gave intimation of a reformation. I wondered that either could think it possible that the people of the United States could be satisfied or contented to intrust interests of such magnitude to an Englishman, or any other foreigner. I wondered that either should think it compatible with my duty, to prefer a stranger to the great number of able natives, who wished for this trust. But so it was. As it has been, from the beginning, a rule not to answer letters of solicitation or recommendation for offices, I never answered either. Mr. Read was appointed, and the disappointed candidate is now, it seems, indulging his revenge. A meaner, a more artful, or a more malicious libel has not appeared. As far as it alludes to me, I despise it; but I have no doubt it is a libel against the whole government, and as such ought to be prose-

[1] See page 5.

cuted.[1] I do not think it wise to execute the alien law against poor Priestley at present. He is as weak as water, as unstable as Reuben, or the wind. His influence is not an atom in the world.

Having long possessed evidence the most satisfactory to my mind, that Collot is a pernicious and malicious intriguer, I have been always ready and willing to execute the alien law upon him. We are now about to enter on a negotiation with France, but this is no objection against expelling from this country such an alien as he is. On the contrary, it is more necessary to remove such an instrument of mischief from among our people, for his whole time will be employed in exciting corrupt divisions, whether he can succeed or not. As to Letombe, if you can prove "that he paid the bribes ordered by the French Minister, Adet," or any thing like it, he ought to be sent away too. But perhaps it would be better to signify that it is expected that he go, than to order him out at first by proclamation. There is a respect due to public commissions, which I should wish to preserve as far as may be consistent with safety.

The alien law, I fear, will upon trial be found inadequate to the object intended, but I am willing to try it in the case of Collot.[2]

[1] A curious and interesting account of the personal history of Thomas Cooper, including the two letters here mentioned, is given in the notes to Wharton's *State Trials, &c.*, pp. 659 – 681. There can be no doubt that this prosecution was a mistake. The fact of his having been a disappointed applicant for office would have been a far more effective instrument to rely upon, in order to neutralize his influence.

[2] It is worthy of remark that this letter contains the closest approximation to any expression of opinion upon the alien and sedition laws, to be found in the whole of Mr. Adams's correspondence during his administration. He was in fact regarded by Mr. Hamilton and the ultra members of the federal party as lukewarm, if not unfriendly to them. Yet the entire responsibility for the measures has been made to fall upon him! General Washington's opinions, as expressed, were much more decided. See the letters to Spotswood and to Washington, in Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. pp. 345, 387. There are other letters still unpublished to the same effect. General Hamilton thought the laws required amendment, as not effective enough. *Hamilton's Works*, Hamilton to Dayton, vol. vi. pp. 388 – 389.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 14 August, 1799.

Inclosed are four petitions for mercy. One from Conrad Marks, Frederick Heyney, Anthony Stahler, John Getman, Valentine Kuder, Jacob Kline, David Schaffer, and Philip Desh; another from George Schaffer, Daniel Schwarts, Henry Stahler, Christian Rhodes, and Henry Schaffer; a third from Jacob Eyerman and John Everhart; and a fourth from John Fries; all supported by numerous petitioners in their behalf.

I wish Dr. Priestley could see these petitions, and be asked to consider whether it would be a pleasant thing to have an equal number of his neighbors in Northumberland brought by his exertions and example into a situation equally humble. I pray you to communicate these petitions to the heads of department, and especially to the Attorney-General. I wish all to consider whether it is proper that any answer should be given, by me or my order, to any of them. I think it may be said that these people are brought to humble themselves "in dust and ashes before their offended country." That repentance, however, which, in the sight of an all penetrating heaven, may be sufficiently sincere to obtain the pardon of sins, cannot always be sufficiently certain in the eyes of mortals to justify the pardon of crimes.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 16 August, 1799.

I have received your favor of the 10th. Mr. Shaw discovered his omission of numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and the paper of extracts, and sent them on the next day. I hope you received them in course. I have read the address to the independent electors of Pennsylvania, and am very curious to know where all this will end.[1] The trial will bring out some whimsical

[1] Mr. Pickering in his letter wrote: "The address to the electors of Pennsylvania is unquestionably the production of Tench Coxe, late commissioner of the revenue, and until May 8th, 1792, assistant to the Secretary of the treasury." Mr. Coxe had been removed from office, upon a report made on his case by the Cabinet officers.

things.[1] At present I will say nothing. I have no apprehension for myself or the public from the consequences.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 23 August, 1799.

My thoughts and feelings are exactly in unison with yours, expressed in your favor of the 17th.[2] I would propose that our envoys be landed at Lisbon, and take an overland journey to Paris, through Madrid. This will give them an opportunity of gaining much information, useful to their country. In this case the frigate may take Mr. Smith and carry him to Constantinople, or the envoys may be landed at Bilbao or Bessarabia. The frigate in either case may cruise, and take up the envoys on their return at Lisbon or Bilbao, or we can send another vessel for them to any place. It will be total ruin to any of our frigates to lie in French harbors all winter. I hope our envoys will not be long in negotiation. Their instructions will be precise, and they may be as categorical as they please.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 24 August, 1799.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 16th, and read the letter of Mr. B. H. Phillips, our consul at Curaçao, of 20th July, and the papers inclosed with it, which I now return. It is right to communicate these documents to Mr. Van Polanen and to Mr. Murray, and to remonstrate in clear language to the Batavian government against the partiality of the governor

[1] Mr. Pickering had mentioned that process had been instituted against William Duane, for libel.

[2] Mr. Stoddert had proposed that the frigate United States should carry out the new ministers to France, and return without a detention of more than a fortnight. But he goes on to say; —

"Talking on this subject with some of the heads of department, I find that it is the expectation that the vessel which carries the ministers, will wait to bring them back, and for this purpose will wait till the spring to avoid a winter passage.

In this view of the subject I see many objections to employing the United States in this service."

and council,[1] and the scandalous conduct of the frigate. But still, I think we have something to do to teach our own American seamen, and especially captains, more discretion. At such a time and in such a place, the sailors ought to have had more prudence than to have gone on Sunday or any other day into dance-houses with French sailors, and the captains ought to have known that it was their duty to apply to the government of the place to suppress riots, rather than go and join in them in person, though in order to suppress them. If any legal evidence can be produced to prove that the governor and council are more or less concerned in the privateers, it would be a ground of very serious representations to their superiors.

I think it, and always thought it, unfortunate, that when the authority was given to interdict commerce with the French islands, it was not extended to others, especially Dutch. I mention these in particular, because the interested character and the humiliated condition in which they were known to be, should have suggested the necessity of the measure. The motives and reasons, however, for adding the Spaniards, Swedes, and Danes, were not much less.

If an expedition to restore the Stadtholder is undertaken in concert with the King of Prussia, it may succeed; if without him, it is more uncertain. I make no dependence on any such probable events.[2] By the way, some weeks ago you gave me encouragement to expect a letter from our minister at Berlin, which you had received. In the multiplicity of business you have omitted it. I wish to see it as soon as possible. If at the future session Congress should authorize the suspension of commerce with Swedish and Danish islands as well as Dutch, I should think it worth while to send a minister to those courts. But I will not promise it shall be Mr. Smith. In my opinion, he ought to go to Constantinople.

[1] In protecting French privateers. A Dutch frigate had saluted one of these vessels coming into the harbor of Curaçao, with an American schooner, the Nautilus, as a prize.

[2] Mr. Pickering had expressed the opinion that it would probably succeed. He thought Denmark and Sweden might in such case be disposed to exclude French privateers from their West India islands. He was in favor of sending a temporary minister to both these courts to favor that object, and he recommended Mr. William Smith, of South Carolina, then at Lisbon.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 29 August, 1799.

Sir, — I received last night your favor of the 23d. I am very glad to be informed that the instructions for the envoys will be prepared in a few days,[1] and that you have written to Mr. Davie. What think you of our envoys landing at Lisbon, and the frigate that carries them taking Mr. Smith to Constantinople, or cruising on the Spanish coast or in the Mediterranean? I am not for delaying the negotiation with the Turks, or any other measure, on account of the negotiation with France. In my opinion, the charm is broken. It has been broken from the moment the invasion of England was laid aside. That project, raised and supported with infinite artifice, kept up the terror and frenzy of the world; but it is over, and can never be again excited.

I had like to have said that the alarm of the yellow fever gives me more uneasiness than any other alarm. The dispute of the commissioners under the 6th article gives me much concern.[2] I shall write you in a few days on that subject. My mind is made up thus far. The treaty, as far as it depends on me, shall be executed with candor and good faith. No unworthy artifice or chicanery shall be practised on my part, no, not though the consequence should be the payment of all the demands. We must, however, do our utmost to obtain an explanation that may shelter our country from injustice.

B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Trenton, 29 August, 1799.

Sir, — The officers are now all at this place, and not badly accommodated. Will you, Sir, pardon the liberty I take, not in my official but private character, in expressing a wish that it may not be inconvenient for you to join them here, before our

[1] Mr. Pickering had written, "two or three days, to submit to the consideration of the heads of department."

[2] This was the commission under Jay's treaty, sitting at Philadelphia, to examine the claims of British subjects, from which the American commissioners thought it their duty to withdraw.

ministers depart for France? It may happen that a knowledge of recent events in Europe may be acquired just before the sailing of the ministers, which would make some alteration in their instructions necessary; and possibly these events might be of a nature to require the suspension for a time of the mission.

I could urge both public considerations, and those which relate more immediately to yourself, to justify the wish I have ventured to express; but I will only say, that I have the most perfect conviction that your presence here, before the departure of the ministers, would afford great satisfaction to the best disposed and best informed men in that part of the country with which I am best acquainted; and I believe, to the great mass of good men all over the United States.

I will only add that I write this letter without communication with any person; that if I err, the error is all my own. In my motives I cannot be mistaken.

I have the honor to be, &c. &c.

BEN. STODDERT.

TO BENJAMIN STODDERT.

(Private.)

Quincy, 4 September, 1799.

SIR, — I have received your kind letter of the 29th of August, and I thank you for the friendly sentiments expressed in it, in your private character.

You urge me to join you and the other public officers at Trenton, before our ministers depart for France, and this from considerations which relate more immediately to myself, as well as others of a public nature.

For myself, I have neither hopes nor fears. But if I could see any public necessity or utility in my presence at Trenton, I would undertake the journey, however inconvenient to myself or my family. I would not, indeed, hesitate, if it were only to give any reasonable satisfaction to the "best disposed and best informed men." But you must be sensible that for me to spend two or three months at Trenton with unknown accommodations, cannot be very agreeable. Alone, and in private, I can put up with any thing; but in my public station, you know I cannot. The terms of accommodation with France were so minutely

considered and discussed by us all, before I took leave of you at Philadelphia, that I suppose there will be no difference of sentiments among us. The draught will soon be laid before you. If any considerable difference should unexpectedly arise between the heads of department, I will come at all events. Otherwise, I see no necessity for taking a step that will give more *éclat* to the business than I think it deserves. I have no reason nor motive to precipitate the departure of the envoys. If any information of recent events in Europe should arrive, which, in the opinion of the heads of department, or of the envoys themselves, would render any alteration in their instructions necessary or expedient, I am perfectly willing that their departure should be suspended, until I can be informed of it, or until I can join you. I am well aware of the possibility of events which may render a suspension, for a time, of the mission, very proper.[1] France has always been a pendulum. The extremest vibration to the left has always been suddenly followed by the extremest vibration to the right. I fear, however, that the extremest vibration has not yet been swung.

Upon this subject I solicit your confidential communications by every post. As I have ever considered this manœuvre of the French as the deepest and subtlest, which the genius of the Directory and their minister has ever invented for the division of our people, I am determined, if they ever succeed in it, the world shall be convinced that their success was owing either to want of capacity, or want of support, in

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. Though I have marked this letter *private*, you may use it at your discretion for the purposes intended.

[1] Out of this obviously just and natural view of possible contingencies, Mr. Hamilton and his friends in the cabinet endeavored to construct a charge against Mr. Adams, of misleading them as to his design that the mission should proceed. Nothing is more clear throughout this correspondence than the fixedness of the policy pursued by Mr. Adams, subject to modification only by circumstances which could not be foreseen. Mr. Wolcott was the authority for Mr. Hamilton's statement. His wishes evidently biased his judgment. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 471.

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Trenton, 9 September, 1799.

SIR, — I have the honor to inclose the opinions of the Attorney-General and heads of departments on the petitions of John Fries and others, insurgents in Bucks and Northampton counties in Pennsylvania, that no pardon should *now* be granted, nor any answer given.

I am revising the draught of instructions for the envoys to France, and making the alterations which have been agreed on. I expect to transmit them to you by to-morrow's mail; and am, with great respect, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

(Inclosed.)

C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Alexandria, 2 September, 1799.

SIR, — On the 29th of last month I had the honor to receive your letter of the 26th, inclosing the President's of the 14th, and the several petitions for pardon in favor of John Fries and others, charged with high treason, and George Schaffer and others, convicted of misdemeanor, and Jacob Eyerman and John Everhart, charged with misdemeanor, in the late insurrection in Northampton and other counties in Pennsylvania.

The question proposed by the President affecting the liberty and property of some individuals, and the lives of others, has received my particular attention and most mature deliberation. I understand it as meaning whether any of the suppliants should be pardoned; for unless a pardon is granted in some of the cases, I am humbly of opinion no answer should be returned in any.

The power of pardoning criminals is vested in the Chief Magistrate for the public good. In deciding upon a petition for pardon, it is to be considered whether it will more conduce to the public good to deny or to grant it. To a benevolent and generous heart acts of mercy are so pleasing as often to overpower discretion, so that mercy to a few is cruelty to many.

In the course of five years, two insurrections against the lawful authority of the United States have happened in Pennsylvania. At a great public expense they have been each quelled. The first was more alarming, and was quelled at a much greater expense, than the last. The offenders in the first experienced the presidential clemency, and not a traitor suffered the punishment of the law. The offenders in the last, charged with treason, are yet all to be tried; and in the late defence of Fries, I understand, the dangerous doctrine was avowed by his advocates, of whom the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was one, that to resist by force the execution of a general revenue law of the United States, with intent that it should never be executed in certain counties, amounted not to treason, but to a misdemeanor only.

Pennsylvania, possessing very many good, is not without a considerable number of bad citizens, some of whom are ignorant, refractory, headstrong, and wicked. From these circumstances, I think an exemplary punishment of rebellious conduct is more necessary and will be more salutary in that State than in any other, and therefore that considerations of public policy require that the most criminal of the insurgents should be left to the due and impartial course of the law.

If this be most proper in regard to those whose lives are in jeopardy, it certainly is most proper towards those who have been or shall be convicted of misdemeanors, and whose punishments do not or shall not exceed the measure of their crimes.

In the treason cases, it is uncertain who, if any, will be convicted; but after judgment it will be then in season and also in the power of the President to discriminate, and to arrest the sword of justice, in regard to those who shall appear to have the best claim to his gracious and merciful interposition.

The like opportunity will occur in relation to those who shall be hereafter convicted of misdemeanor. As to such as have been already sentenced, no special circumstances are stated which distinguish the cases, and as no sufficient cause appears for pardoning all of them, there is no ground for exempting any from the punishment which they have been ordered to suffer; and consequently all should satisfy the sentences of the law. I believe Eyerman is a German priest, who but lately came into America, and instantly entered on the function of sowing sedi-

tion, and preparing his followers for works of darkness, disobedience, and rebellion. He has not been tried, and there is no danger of his being punished beyond his deserts.

Upon the whole, it is my mature opinion that the President should not return any answer to either of the petitions, and that no pardon should be granted under present circumstances to any of the petitioners.

I am, Sir, very respectfully, &c.

CHARLES LEE.

Eyerman is a German priest, who has been in America about two years, and not only thus early a sower of sedition in the country where he has found an asylum, but of an infamous, immoral character. Such has been my information.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

We entirely concur in the Attorney-General's opinion, that none of the petitioners should *now* be pardoned, nor any answer given them.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.
OLIVER WOLCOTT.
JAMES MCHENRY.
BEN. STODDERT.

Trenton, 7 September 1797. 1799

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

Trenton, 11 September, 1799.

SIR, — The general alarm of the yellow fever in Philadelphia, occasioned the removal of the public offices to this place. This has caused some delay in finishing the draught of instructions for the envoys to the French republic, which I had the honor of transmitting you yesterday,[1] the draught having been previously examined, altered, and amended, conformably to the opinions of the heads of department. I now inclose some papers relating to the subject, which want of time prevented my forwarding yesterday.

[1] Mr. Pickering's letter of the 10th, covering the instructions, is marked thus: "Recd. Sept. 14th, at night, by the hand of William Smith, Esq., from Boston." See the letter in answer, dated the 16th.

Of the three leading points which were fixed before your departure from Philadelphia, we have ventured to propose a deviation in one only, that respecting the *rôle d'equipage*.[1] For, however clear in our own minds is the right of American citizens to a full indemnification for captures and condemnations for want of that document, after much deliberation, we thought, if France would submit that and other questions to a board impartially constituted, as proposed in the draught, or in *secret* declarations or stipulations agree to the specific rules of adjudications therein detailed, that the people of America might think the negotiation ought not to be frustrated, as it might be, by making such a concession an ultimatum. We thought, indeed, that the captures of our vessels, because their cargoes were produced or fabricated in the British dominions, perfectly unjustifiable, and a case more unexceptionable, if made an ultimatum. But if France agrees to the rules of adjudication, or to the mode of constituting a board of commissioners, as now proposed, we conceived that the United States would be satisfied.

I propose to send a copy of the draught of instructions to Mr. Ellsworth, and to invite his observations upon them, as it is important that he should be satisfied. And if want of time should prevent a second transmission of the instructions to you, (which, however, I think will not be the case,) may I take the liberty of proposing, if your judgment should not be definitively made up on particular points, that we may, if Mr. Ellsworth should desire it, and we all concur in opinion with him, make alterations in the draught? Provided that none of the ultimata be varied, except that which prescribes the mode of organizing the board of commissioners.

On the 26th ultimo I received the inclosed private letter from Mr. Murray, dated the 18th of June. The "very portentous scene," which, by his advices from Paris, "appeared to be opening there," doubtless referred to what the newspapers have called "another explosion." The dismission of Treilhard from the Directory, and the forced resignation of la Reveillère le Peaux and Merlin, which, with the other proceedings of the two councils, demonstrate that the dictatorial power of the Directory is overturned, have suggested to the heads of department some

[1] Volume viii. p. 627.

doubts of the expediency of an immediate departure of the envoys.

The men lately in power, who gave the assurances you required, relative to the mission, being ousted in a manner indicative of a revolution in the public mind, and, according to Mr. Murray's letter, the threats, now first uttered by the military, *of a* KING, show such instability and uncertainty in the government of France, and are ominous of such further and essential changes, probably at no great distance, as made it appear to us a duty to submit to your consideration the question of a temporary suspension of the mission to that country, where a state of things, and that final result which you long since foresaw and predicted, appear to be rapidly advancing. Such a suspension would seem to us to place the United States in a more commanding situation, and enable the President to give such a turn to the mission as the impending changes should in his opinion demand.

Or if a revival of the system of terror should first take place, which the last arrival of intelligence at New York now shows to be probable, still the question of *suspending the mission* seems to the heads of department to merit serious consideration. It is an undoubted fact, that the character of the late change at Paris has been purely Jacobinical. The clubs have been again opened, and the Jacobins are everywhere active to electrify the people.[1]

I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Trenton, 13 September, 1799.

SIR, — I am honored with your letter of the 4th instant, and cannot but lament that the accommodations to be obtained here are very far inferior to such as would be suitable for the Presi-

[1] This letter, though sent in the name of the Secretary of State, was concurred in cordially by the Secretary of the Treasury and by the Secretary of War — and more hesitatingly by Mr. Stoddert, who had begun to show symptoms of disagreement with the policy of his colleagues. Mr. Lee, the Attorney-General, had differed with them on the nomination of Mr. Vans Murray, which he approved. He also differed with them upon the propriety of suspending the mission.

dent of the United States. Indeed, I am afraid none could be obtained which would not be extremely inconvenient and disagreeable to both Mrs. Adams and yourself. Yet having no motive unconnected with your honor and that of the government, I hope you will pardon my freedom in adhering to my wish that you would join the officers here, before the departure of the mission to France. Or, if that should be suspended, that you would not give the order for the suspension before your arrival here. Colonel Pickering has addressed a letter to you on this subject, with the concurrence of the other departments. If you should be determined on the measure, nothing will be lost by delaying to take it for a month, for I am sure the commissioners will not sooner than that time be ready to sail; and Mr. Davie, who will leave North Carolina the 20th September, could not be stopped much short of Trenton, if you were to give orders for stopping him. On the other hand, if you should consider the measure as a questionable one, you might, a month hence, decide it, with the advantage of the lights which all the advices to be received for a month, which may be very important, might throw on the subject. Whether it be decided to suspend the mission, or otherwise, the decision may and will be important. It will be a great measure either way, and will be attended with consequences in proportion to its magnitude. All the solemnity possible should perhaps be given to the decision. General Washington, one of the most attentive men in the world to the manner of doing things, owed a great proportion of his celebrity to this circumstance. It appears to me, that the decision in question would be better supported throughout the country, if it be taken when you are surrounded by the officers of government and the ministers, even if it should be against their unanimous advice.

I will state, as briefly as I can, other reasons which influence my wishes on the subject of your coming to Trenton.

I have never entertained the opinion, prevalent with many persons, that we could not, during the present war in Europe, maintain peace with both France and England, though I believe it will be a difficult matter. There are already indications that England looks at us with a jaundiced eye, arising in part perhaps from the effort to treat with France, in part from the representations made by their commissioners and their minister, on

the subject of the commission under the sixth article of the treaty. No doubt their commissioners had for a long time been prejudiced and soured, and have in some instances acted as if it was their desire to plunge the two nations into war. Our own, I believe, have been actuated by pure views, but the difference between them on almost every question has been so wide, that it is difficult to conceive that both sides could have been rational, and at the same time possess a desire to bring the business to a just conclusion. Mr. Liston, mild and reasonable as he may appear on other subjects, has not been so on this, and Mr. Rich, who is to return to England in the packet, has written a letter to our commissioners sufficiently indicative of a mind highly irritated.

We have a right to make peace with France without asking the permission of England, and we are not to submit to unreasonable and unjust constructions of the treaty for fear of her resentment. It is our inclination and our policy to yield to no injustice, and to do none. Acting on this system, if England insists on a quarrel, however we may lament the calamity, we need not fear the result, if our own people are satisfied that the government has acted in all instances right. But amicable and candid explanations are due to England and to ourselves. I should presume it would be very proper to assure her immediately, that to obtain peace with France we would sacrifice no just right of England; and that a fair and candid representation of the true grounds of difference between the commissioners should be immediately furnished to Mr. King, with assurances of the sincere desire of the government to execute justly the treaty according to its true meaning. Perhaps it might be found that some constructions of our commissioners might be yielded, and that England might be told on what fair ground we could meet her.

Colonel Pickering is certainly too much occupied with the business of his department to find time to understand this subject so well as our commissioners and the Attorney-General must do; and it has therefore appeared to me that the best course would be to call these gentlemen, at least the Attorney-General, to the seat of government, to prepare the representation, which should afterwards be pruned, by the heads of department, of every thing like acrimony, and of any argument, if any such

found admittance, calculated to confute rather than to convince. Thus corrected, it might be submitted to the President. Now, it seems to me that this course could not be adopted without the direction of the President, nor, indeed, so well executed without his presence; and I think the peace of the country may depend upon taking the true ground now, and upon promptly carrying into effect the proper measures to prevent a misunderstanding, where it is so much our interest to be understood.

The great number of captures and condemnations, at Providence and Jamaica, of our vessels, has produced a sourness among the best of our merchants, which will increase. If they arise from the avarice and iniquity of the judges, without any agency on the part of government, they would cease on a representation of the injury. If they are countenanced by the government, this would probably cease, and reparation be made, if misrepresentations and prejudices are removed. At all events, it is degrading to our government to suffer them to continue, without an effort to prevent them.

On the subject of the mission to France, your character is known throughout the whole of the country; the gentlemen who fill the great offices more immediately connected with the President, however high their merit, and however respected, where known, not having before acted on the great theatre in conspicuous stations, are not enough known to inspire the same degree of confidence; and it may not be believed that the instructions to the ministers will wear exactly the same complexion, if you are at Quincy, when they are delivered, as they would have done, had you been on the spot.

As to the considerations which I meant as more immediately relating to yourself, I have been apprehensive that artful designing men might make such use of your absence from the seat of government, when things so important to restore peace with one country, and to preserve it with another, were transacting, as to make your next election less honorable than it would otherwise be.

I have thus, Sir, in a very tedious letter indulged myself in great freedoms. I have given my opinions with candor, but with great diffidence; for I am sensible that I am but a poor politician. I hope you will not think the trouble of an answer at all necessary. Whatever course you take, my inclination

will prompt me to think right, and my duty to support. I will, however, observe, that if you should come to Trenton by the 10th of October, it will be in time to see the ministers, should they proceed on the mission; in one month later, it will be safe to go to Philadelphia, where I presume you would choose to be, about that time.

I have the honor to be, &c., &c.

BEN. STODDERT.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 14 September, 1799.

SIR, — I received last night your favor of the 5th. The gentleman you mention is a native of Boston, and well known. I shall make no observations on his character. None of the suspicions of the Americans in France, which the gentleman of Maryland mentioned to you, will surprise the federalists in this quarter.[1] But the popularity of the French has so dwindled away, that no impression can be made to any great effect in their favor. The nomination of envoys to treat has taken away so many pretexts from some, and given such opportunities for others to "back out," as my wagoners express themselves, that the French government at least has few advocates left. Hichborn is a man of talents, but of such mysterious, enigmatical, and incomprehensible conduct, that no party seems to have much confidence in him, though he is supposed to be inveterate in opposition to federal men and measures.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 16 September, 1799.

SIR, — Saturday, the 14th, at night, I received, by the hand of William Smith, Esquire, your favor of the 10th. I have once read, with some care, the important State paper inclosed with it, and find little to add, little to diminish, and very little to

[1] These suspicions mentioned in Mr. Stoddert's letter were, that Mr. Hichborn was an instrument of the French government, returning home to effect some secret purpose. This is the same gentleman mentioned in vol. ii. p. 410.

correct.[1] You do not inform me whether it has been considered by the heads of department, and received their corrections or approbation, but intimate that you should forward, by the mail of the next day, some papers respecting it. I shall wait for these, and then give them, and the excellent composition they are connected with, a more attentive perusal, and write my sentiments fully on the subject. Little time shall be lost. The revolution in the Directory, and the revival of the clubs and private societies in France, and the strong appearances of another reign of democratic fury and sanguinary anarchy approaching, seem to justify a relaxation of our zeal for the sudden and hasty departure of our envoys. If they remain in America till all apprehensions of the autumnal equinoctial gales are passed, it will be so much the more agreeable for them, and not less safe for the public. I am not sanguine enough to anticipate news of the arrival of Prince Charles or Marshal Suwarrow at Paris, or of a league with the King of Prussia, to restore monarchy to France; but I think we may expect news by the middle of October, which it may be advantageous for us to know, before the departure of our envoys.[2] I would come on to Trenton before their sailing, if there were reason to suppose there would be any utility in such a sacrifice. But I presume the whole business may be as well conducted by letter and the post. If you think otherwise, you will please to let me know.

TO J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 18 September, 1799.

SIR, — I have ruminated so long upon the case of Andrew Anderson, that I am under some apprehension that my feelings have grown too strong, and produced a result that will not appear to you perfectly right. I consider Cox and his associates

[1] The instructions to the new ministers.

[2] It seems difficult to conceive how any members of the cabinet could have misunderstood the extent of Mr. Adams's design to postpone the departure of the envoys, after the reading of this letter. They would not have done so, if they had not been totally blinded by their hopes, that they could ultimately overrule the whole project. They were not without stimulants from persons outside to attempt this. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 245. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 414.

as very artful men, and, being probably considered as men of great consequence in that country, they had the influence to seduce a poor soldier to a crime, for which they probably deserve to be punished, as well as he. In announcing the pardon inclosed, you may order what solemnities you think fit. He may receive his pardon at the gallows, where it may be announced that it will be the last time such a crime will be pardoned.[1]

OLIVER ELLSWORTH TO JOHN ADAMS.

Hartford, 18 September, 1799.

Sir, — If the present convulsion in France, and the symptoms of a greater change at hand, should induce you, ~~as many~~ seem to expect, to postpone for a short time the mission to that country, I wish for the earliest notice of it. The Circuit Court in this State and Vermont fell through last spring from the indisposition of Judge Chase, and must now fall through again from the indisposition of Judge Cushing, unless I attend them. I am beginning the court here, and should proceed on to Vermont, if I was sure of not being called on in the mean time to embark. It is, Sir, my duty to obey, not advise, and I have only to hope that you will not disapprove of the method I take to learn the speediest intimation of yours.[2]

I have the honor to be, &c.

Oliver Ellsworth.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 19 September, 1799.

Sir, — On the 17th, at night, I had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 11th, and have given it that attention which the great importance of its contents deserves.[3] On the subject of the *rôle d'équipage*, I feel a strong reluctance to any relaxation

[1] "A soldier tried on a charge of deserting his post, and aiding and assisting two prisoners to make their escape from confinement, when he was sentinel and had charge of them, and losing his arms and accoutrements." McHenry's Letter, 11th September.

[2] This letter had been instigated by more than one member of the cabinet. Mr. Ellsworth seems to have sent it at a venture. See his letters to Mr. Wolcott in Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 265, 266.

[3] Page 23.

of the peremptory demand we agreed on before I left Philadelphia, and General Marshall's observations are very just, yet it may be wiser to leave it to the discretion of the envoys, under the limitations suggested, and I shall acquiesce in the opinion of the heads of department. I am glad you have sent a copy to the chief justice. I had several long conversations with him last winter, on the whole subject. He appears to me to agree most perfectly in sentiment with me upon every point of our policy towards France and England, and this policy was founded only in perfect purity of moral sentiment, natural equity, and Christian faith towards both nations. I am, therefore, under no hesitation in the propriety of sending the draught to him, nor in consenting that, if want of time should prevent a second transmission of the instructions to me, the heads of department, in concert with him, may make alterations in the draught, within the limitations you propose. Indeed, Mr. Ellsworth is so great a master of business, and his colleagues are so intelligent, that I should not be afraid to allow them a greater latitude of discretion, if it were not unfair to lay upon them alone the burden and the dangerous responsibility that may accompany this business.

That portentous scenes are opened in France, is past a doubt. The directors, who sent us the assurances, are, for what we know, all removed. The new ones we know nothing of. Barras, we have no reason to believe very friendly to us. Siéyes, we have reason to fear, is unfriendly. The "threats by the military, of a king," which Mr. Murray mentions, are to me no solid indications of a restoration. That every comet, which has appeared, will return, I have no doubt; but the period of its revolution is very difficult to calculate. The system of terror will revive, if the terrorists can find means to revive it. These means imply money to pay, clothe, feed, and arm soldiers, on one hand, and timidity and dejection enough in their domestic enemies to submit to their exactions and cruelties. These are all problems to us, to all Europe, and, probably, to the French themselves.

There is one observation which appears to me of great importance. The reign of terror has ever appeared the most disposed to accommodate with us. This is humiliating enough, but it is not our fault. It is not very clear to me what our

inferences ought to be from this fact. Neither the royalists, nor the aristocrats, nor the priesthood, have ever discovered the least complaisance for us. It is an awful question to me what chance we should have, if our ambassadors should have to treat at a Congress for a general pacification. Should we not have more to fear from the secret jealousy of every power, than even from that of France and Spain? With great anxiety upon this whole subject, and with much respect for you, I remain

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. I return Mr. Murray's letter, and I will soon write more directly concerning the draught.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 21 September, 1799.

Sometime between the 10th and 15th of October I shall join you at Trenton, and will suspend till that time the ultimate determination concerning the instructions. I pray you to write to the Attorney-General to meet us. We must be all together, to determine all the principles of our negotiations with France and England.

I have been obliged to sail for Europe in the middle of winter once, and on the 17th of November at another time. Any day between the 20th and 30th of October is as good a time to embark for Europe, as any part of the year. If our envoys are delayed so long at least, it will be no misfortune.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 21 September, 1799.

SIR, — I have read over and over again your letter of the 13th. I regret extremely another blunder of the post-office, by which it has been sent to the southward and returned to me only last night. You needed not to have apologized for its length; there is not a word in it to spare. You may not write me any more letters, which are to reach Quincy or Boston, after the 29th of September. I will be at Trenton by the 10th, 12th, or at latest

the 15th of October, if no fatal accident prevents. Mrs. Adams, although she is determined to risk her life by one more journey to Philadelphia, will not come with me. She will come after me, so that I shall want no extraordinary accommodations. I can and will put up, with my private secretary and two domestics only, at the first tavern or first private house I can find. I shall desire the attendance of the Attorney-General and the American commissioners as soon as possible, at Trenton, after the 12th or 15th of October.

I have only one favor to beg, and that is that a ~~certain~~ election may be wholly laid out of this question and all others. I ~~know~~ the people of America so well, and the light in which I stand in their eyes, that no alternative will ever be left to me, but to be a President of three votes or no President at all, and the difference, in my estimation, is not worth three ~~farthings~~.[1]

With a strong attachment to you, I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Quincy, 21 September, 1799.

I pray you to write me no letters to reach Quincy or Boston after the 29th. On next Monday, sen'night, I shall set out for Trenton, and reach it at latest by the 15th of October. I also request that you would write to the Attorney-General and the American commissioners to meet us all at Trenton at as early a day, after the 15th, as you shall judge proper. I also desire that all this may be kept as secret as possible, that my journey may meet as little interruption as possible. I shall come alone. Mrs. Adams will follow me soon enough to go with me to Philadelphia.

TO CHIEF JUSTICE ELLSWORTH.

Quincy, 22 September, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — I received last night your favor of the 18th. Judge Cushing called here yesterday in his way to Vermont.

[1] Mr. Wolcott, on the other hand, seeking for bad motives, finds them in the "belief that the President supposes he is conciliating the opposition." Gibbs's *Memoirs*, &c. vol. ii. p. 279.

This, however, may not perhaps make any alteration in your views. The convulsions in France, the change of the Directory, and the prognostics of greater change, will certainly induce me to postpone for a longer or shorter time the mission to Paris. I wish you to pursue your office of Chief Justice of the United States without interruption, till you are requested to embark. You will receive from the Secretary of State letters which will occupy your leisure hours. I should be happy to have your own opinion upon all points. We may have further information from Europe. If your departure for Europe should be postponed to the 20th of October, or even to the 1st of November, as safe and as short a passage may be expected as at any other season of the year. This is all I can say at present.[1]

With great and sincere esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 28 September, 1799.

I return you Mr. Murray's letters of May 28th, June 13th and 22d, and July 13th and 15th, and the parts of newspapers inclosed with them. The private letter you sent me from Mr. Murray, some time ago, contained much such a review of the pamphlet of Boulay de la Meurthe. I have been anxious to see it, but it is not yet arrived. A parallel between the English republic and the French must be a curious thing. I have long thought that the present generation in France, England, Ireland, and America, had never read Lord Clarendon. I am afraid Mr. Murray has not. If he had, he would be less sanguine about so early a restoration in France.[2]

For my own part, I have more anxiety about the English than

[1] Mr. Ellsworth communicated the substance of this letter to Mr. Wolcott, construing it as a suspension of his destiny to France. And it seems to have confirmed the cabinet in their confidence that they should finally defeat the mission. The ministers actually sailed on the 3d of November. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 266.

[2] "Mr. Murray (in letters, mostly private, which I have laid before the President) viewing the State of France within, and its foreign relations, from a near station, supposes the republic will not survive six months; the President supposes it will last seven years, and desires his opinion may be remembered." T. Pickering to G. Washington, in Gibbs's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 281.

The republic lasted about five years. The restoration took place sixteen years afterwards.

the French. Chance, or, if you will, Providence, has added to two Scotchmen a Godwinian descendant of a French refugee, and justice, I fear, will not be heard.[1] I own, I doubt whether we had not better meet the result in all its deformities. I am determined, so far as depends upon me, to execute the treaty in its full extent. If it costs us four millions sterling, when it ought not to cost us one, I had rather pay it than depart from good faith or lie under the suspicion of it. If the judgment of Messrs. McDonald, Rich, and Guillemard, finally prevails, British equity will never be forgotten in America. The court have us in their power. If we believe Britons less hungry for plunder than Frenchmen, we shall be deceived.

I shall be with you between the 10th and 15th of October.

T. PICKERING TO JOHN ADAMS.

Trenton, 24 September, 1799.

Sir, — The subject of the proposed mission to France is so important, that, whether it proceed or be suspended, your decision will certainly be the result of your mature consideration. But as the idea has occurred to you of coming to Trenton, and you have intimated that you would do it, if judged best, I have consulted my colleagues, and they concur with me in opinion that it will be an eligible step. Governor Davie will probably be here the first week in October, and Judge Ellsworth will doubtless be ready to meet him; or if you should conclude to come on, the judge would certainly be gratified in waiting to accompany you.

Governor Davie, having relinquished his government and made arrangements for the voyage to Europe, will probably be better satisfied, after making the long journey from North Carolina, to return home again, if the further suspension of the mission take place, after a personal interview with you and his colleague; and your final determination relative to the mission will doubtless give more general satisfaction to the community at large, when accompanied with these solemnities.

If, however, the news expected from Europe should be of a

[1] This refers to the commission under the sixth article of Jay's Treaty.

nature, not only to strengthen your reasons for the temporary suspension which you have already deemed expedient; but if new facts should be decisive of the course proper to be pursued, the trouble of your journey may be saved.

These observations are most respectfully submitted to your consideration[1] by

Sir, your most obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

TO B. STODDERT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 26 September, 1799.

I return you Mr. Read's letter, and the note inclosed in your favor of the 19th.[2]

From a long intimacy with Mr. Izard, and a knowledge of his worth, and from some acquaintance with his son, I assure you that nothing of the kind could give me more pleasure than the appointment of Ralph Izard, the son of Ralph Izard of South Carolina, to be a midshipman in the navy. I wish it had been my fortune to have had a son or grandson of a suitable age to be appointed to a similar office in the same day. I shall take you by the hand not long after the 10th of October, I hope.

JOHN ADAMS.

O. ELLSWORTH TO JOHN ADAMS.

Windsor, 5 October, 1799.

SIR, — Since you passed on, I have concluded to meet Governor Davie at Trenton, which he probably will expect, and which, besides putting it in our power to pay you our joint respects, and to receive as fully any communication of your views as you may wish to make, may enable me to accompany him eastward, should you continue inclined to such suspension of our mission, as, under present aspect, universal opinion, I believe, and certainly my own, would justify.

It is a matter of some regret, Sir, that I did not consult you

[1] It would appear from the tone of this letter as if the cabinet, at this date, had concerted their measures to secure the defeat of the mission, and felt confident of success. Hence the extent of their surprise and mortification when the combination proved of no avail.

[2] These papers requested the appointment of Mr. Izard.

on the propriety of this visit;[1] but if I err, experience has taught me that you can excuse.

I have the honor, &c.

OLIVER ELLSWORTH.

C. LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Winchester, 6 October, 1799.

SIR, — Hoping it will not be deemed improper in me to give my opinion, before it is asked, relative to the suspension of the mission to France, I will take the liberty of expressing it. I have reflected on the subject a good deal, and I cannot perceive any sufficient reasons for the suspension.[2] Such a measure would exceedingly disappoint the general expectation of America, and, exciting the jealousy and suspicion of many concerning your sincerity in making the nomination, would afford your enemies an opportunity of indulging their evil dispositions. If the envoys proceed, as I think they ought, it does not appear to me that any inconvenience will be felt by the United States, even if they should find a monarch on the throne of France, which I by no means expect will very soon happen.[3]

I am, Sir, with perfect respect, &c.

CHARLES LEE.

[1] The singular language used in this letter, indicating in the first paragraph a change, and in the second, a mere concealment of purpose, taken in connection with Mr. Pickering's letter of the 24th, suggesting the presence of Mr. Ellsworth, might well justify a suspicion of concert between them, without meriting any reproach on Mr. Adams as being unreasonable.

On this same day, Mr. Ellsworth reported the substance of his conference with Mr. Adams, "*to a friend.*" Such is the guarded language of Mr. Gibbs. That friend was probably Mr. Pickering. Gibbs's *Fed. Adm.*, vol. ii. p. 267, note. p. 280.

[2] Mr. Jay's opinion is quite as clear. See his letter to Theophilus Parsons. Jay's *Life of John Jay*, vol. ii. p. 296.

[3] On the other hand, Mr. Hamilton had worked himself up to the apprehension that the execution of this measure would "involve the United States in a war on the side of France with her enemies." Mr. Pickering does not seem to have apprehended so much that no treaty could be made, as that it would be made too easily, and would go too far against Great Britain. Mr. Wolcott concurred with Mr. Hamilton. Mr. McHenry, on the contrary, although agreeing in their views, seems to have foreseen the possibility of what really happened. See his letter to Washington. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 414. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 280, 281, 282.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Trenton, 16 October, 1799.

Sir, — I request you to order fair copies of the instructions, as corrected last evening, to be prepared and delivered to Judge Ellsworth and Governor Davie, with another for Mr. Murray, without loss of time, and to write a letter to those gentlemen, as envoys extraordinary to the French republic, expressing, with the affectionate respects of the President, his desire that they would take their passage for France on board the frigate the United States, Captain Barry, now lying at Rhode Island, by the 1st of November, or sooner, if consistent with their conveniences. Captain Barry will have orders to land them in any port of France which they may prefer, and to touch at any other ports which they may desire. The President's best wishes for their health and happiness, as well as for an honorable termination of their mission, will attend them. As their visit to France is at one of the most critical, important, and interesting moments that ever have occurred, it cannot fail to be highly entertaining and instructive to them, and useful to their country, whether it terminates in peace and reconciliation, or not. The President sincerely prays God to have them in his holy keeping.[1]

I am, Sir, &c.

John Adams.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Trenton, 16 October, 1799.

I request you to transmit immediate orders to Captain Barry to receive on board his frigate and convey to France, and such port of France as they shall desire, our envoys to the French republic, with directions to touch at any other ports which they may point out, and to sail by the 1st of November, or sooner,

[1] Thus terminated the long continued struggle of the three cabinet ministers to overrule the President; and from this date commences their secret cabal, darkly alluded to in Mr. Stoddert's letter of the 13th September, in conjunction with Mr. Hamilton, to set him aside at the next election. The first movement which was to call out General Washington, had been under consideration by them for some time, awaiting this decision. Mr. McHenry says that Mr. Stoddert and Mr. Lee were now prepared to "advise the dismission, *at least of one.*" Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 243, p. 245, p. 282.

if consistent with their convenience. I need say nothing of the respect to be paid, or the honors to be done, to these great characters. Captain Barry is to await their return to the United States.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Private.)

Trenton, 18 October, 1799.

As the session of Congress draws nigh, I pray you to favor me with your sentiments concerning the communications necessary to be made to Congress of the state of the nation, and particularly a concise narration of the proceedings with St. Domingo and the Isle of France. It may be doubtful, however, whether any thing need be said on the last. A very succinct account of the invitation of the French Directory to our envoys, of the subsequent change, and the short pause made on this side the water in consequence of it, may be proper; and very explicit declarations that no relaxation will take place in any executive part of government in consequence of the mission, till we know its result, either in preparations for defence by sea and land, or in the employment of the means already provided by the legislature. In short, whatever is thought proper to be mentioned to Congress from the full consideration of the state of the nation, in all its relations, will be received from the Secretary of State with great pleasure by his faithful, humble servant.

JOHN ADAMS.

N. B. Perhaps I ought to have mentioned particularly the unfortunate interpretation of the boards of commissioners, the observations to be made on them, and the sentiments proper to be expressed in consequence of them, and the miserable rebellion in Pennsylvania, which must be stated, I suppose, with the means of its suppression.[1]

[1] Similar requests were addressed on the same day to the other cabinet officers. That to Mr. Wolcott is printed in Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 298.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 12 November, 1799.

I think it will be expedient to lay before Congress, on the second day of the session, all the papers which relate to the embassy to France, that they may be printed together, and the public enabled to judge from correct and authentic documents. To this end I request you to order copies to be made of your letter to Mr. Murray and his answer, of his letter to Talleyrand, and his answer, which should be copied in French, and accompanied with a translation into English.

The proclamations, that respecting the insurrection in Pennsylvania, and that respecting St. Domingo, should also be laid before Congress, together with copies of any other papers relative to both transactions, which you may judge necessary or proper, and I pray you to have them prepared accordingly.

The organization of the government of the Mississippi territory, and the demarcation of the line, should perhaps be mentioned to Congress, and I pray you to furnish me a sketch of the facts as they appear from the intelligence in your office.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Philadelphia, 15 November, 1799.

Sir, — By some accident or other, the original papers concerning the conspiracy against the laws and the beginning of the late insurrection in Pennsylvania, were never laid before me. I believe they were transmitted to you by the judge and the marshal. How far it will be necessary to communicate the facts in detail to Congress, you will be so good as to consider; and I should be obliged to you for your sentiments concerning all things to be inserted in the speech, as soon as may be convenient, because the time draws so near that something must be soon brought to a conclusion. I wish for your opinions on all points,[1] but particularly on the rebellion, and the St. Domingo business.

[1] Mr. Wolcott's answer, dated 18th November, 1799, is printed in Gibbs's work, vol. ii. pp. 299 – 306.

TO A. J. DALLAS.

Philadelphia, 2 December, 1799.

I return you my hearty thanks for the obliging present of your reports, in three very handsome volumes, which I received on Saturday. I prize them highly, not only in the light in which you present them, but on account of their intrinsic merit and worth to a profession, which after a divorce of more than a quarter of a century I still hold in affection and veneration.

Candor obliges me to say that I have made a singular observation relative to this work. Although, in the times which have passed since its first publication, the spirit of party has been disposed to call in question the integrity of every man and every action, I have never heard an insinuation against the fidelity of these reports. As the year books, and the reporters who have followed, have fixed the laws of England upon such permanent principles of equity and humanity, I hope these volumes will be the beginning of a series which will prove still more beneficial to mankind.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 7 December, 1799.

The Attorney-General has left with me, and I now send to you, a project of an explanatory article or treaty, and a project of a letter to Mr. King, desiring an ultimatum. There is no business before the government, at this time, of more importance than this, and I pray you to turn your attention to it, and prepare a draught of a letter to Mr. King, to be considered, if possible, on Monday evening at six o'clock, at my chamber, when I ask the favor of your company, with all the heads of department.[2]

[1] Mr. Dallas had addressed the following note to Mr. Adams:

Philadelphia, 30 November, 1799.

SIR, — Permit me to request, that you will honor a set of my reports with a place in your library. If your political cares have not extinguished the professional ardor which you displayed in the early period of your life, the volumes will afford you some amusement.

But I particularly beg you to accept them as a mark of the sincere respect with which I am, Sir, &c. A. J. DALLAS.

[2] Mr. Wolcott's memorandum of the advice given by him at the cabinet meet-

NOTES

Of the President on some observations made to him by the Secretary of the Treasury upon the measures proper to be taken for obtaining an explanation of the 6th article of the treaty with Britain.[1]

Page 2, line 18th. A special commission is proposed. The President understood it to be the unanimous opinion of the heads of department, that no special commission would be necessary. A nomination to the Senate will be necessary to a special commission. The full powers possessed by Mr. King are supposed to be sufficient.

Page 3. The concession proposed in this page, the President fears, and indeed believes, is too well founded. But the facts should be well considered, and be capable of being made certain, before such an admission is made by the President's orders.

Page 13. Although neither nation has been brought to admit that they were chargeable with the first infraction, yet no American can forget the carrying off the negroes.

Page 17. It may not be very material, but the acknowledgment of independence, at the treaty of peace, may fairly imply more than is contended for in the second paragraph of this page, against the authority, validity, and effect of the acts and declarations of the British during the war.

Page 19. I cannot see any distinction in favor of officers, civil, or military, or naval. They are no more bound by obligations of allegiance than any other subjects. I cannot agree to the sentiment at the bottom of this page.

Page 20. I cannot agree that the obligations of allegiance and patriotism are or can be ever inconsistent or irreconcilable. Nor can I admit a supposition which seems to be here implied,

ings on this subject, held on the 13th and 14th November, is given by Mr. Gibbs. Vol. ii. p. 306. He recommended that such a letter and project as the one here mentioned should be prepared. Mr. Stoddert had suggested that the Attorney-General should be the person to perform this duty. See page 27. And this suggestion seems to have been adopted.

[1] In Mr. Wolcott's memorandum, referred to in the last note, it is stated that a report on the subject of the suspension of the boards of commissioners under the British treaty, was made to the President, December 11th, 1799. This report is not found among Mr. Adams's papers; and it is not printed in Mr. Gibbs's work, because "possessed of no present interest." These notes upon that report are without date, but they were probably drawn up on the 12th.

namely, that the revolution or American war, as it was called, had for its object the division of an empire. This will require so long an investigation, and so many distinctions and restrictions, that the whole of this must be expunged.

Page 21. We can never consistently admit that the acts and declarations of Britain were of any legal value at all, not even within the sphere of their influence.

Page 21, section 5th. The President has no control over the opinions of judges. They are as independent as he is. Their judgments in courts must be executed. The President, however, is very much dissatisfied with this passage, and fears that wrong will be done in consequence of it. But he sees no possibility of avoiding it.

Page 23. It is too liberal on the part of the United States to admit that acts of confiscation, passed during the war, shall be considered as having been annulled, in respect to debts, by the treaty of peace. The President is, however, embarrassed by the opinion of the judges, and will not differ from the heads of department upon this point, but would rather, if it is possible, that the point should be left to the board to be appointed, than that a formal acknowledgment should be made by government.

Page 32. The President doubts the expediency of the declaration at the close of the page. It is, or may be thought an ostentation of candor without end, effect, or utility. Perhaps a total silence on this head is sufficient after what has been said in the speech to Congress upon this subject.

TO TOBIAS LEAR.

Philadelphia, 24 December, 1799.

Sir, — I received in due season your letter of the 15th of this month, and immediately communicated it to both houses of Congress in a message. The melancholy event announced in it had been before communicated to the legislature, but upon less authentic and regular evidence. The American people are sincere mourners under the loss of their friend and benefactor. For General Washington, it is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

I pray you, Sir, to present my regards to Madam Washington and all the amiable and worthy family, and assure them of my sincere sympathy with them under this great affliction.

I feel also for yourself, as you have lost in General Washington a friend not to be replaced.[1]

With much esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO MRS. WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 27 December, 1799.

MADAM, — In conformity with the desire of Congress, I do myself the honor to inclose by Mr. William Smith Shaw, my secretary, a copy of their resolutions passed the 24th instant, occasioned by the decease of your late consort, General George Washington, assuring you of the profound respect Congress will ever bear to your person and character, and of their condolence on this afflicting dispensation of Providence. In pursuance of the same desire, I entreat your assent to the interment of the remains of the General under the marble monument to be erected in the capital, at the city of Washington, to commemorate the great events of his military and political life.

Renewing to you, Madam, my expressions of condolence on this melancholy occasion, and assuring you of the profound respect which I personally entertain for your person and character,

I remain, with great esteem, Madam, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] The death of General Washington at this moment cut off the plan which had been maturing to draw him back into the field of politics as President again. The letter of Gouverneur Morris, written by concert with Mr. Hamilton's friends in New England, to sound his feelings on this subject, was probably lying unopened on his table. That event also cut the last thread connecting Mr. Hamilton with Mr. Adams. In his letter to Mr. Lear, Mr. Hamilton speaks of Washington as having been "*an Ægis very essential to him.*" And three days later he writes to Rufus King, "the irreparable loss of an inestimable man removes a control which was felt, and was very salutary." This control was tacitly not less operative over himself, than over the individual upon whom he sought to bring it to bear. The rest of this last letter, and especially the postscript, reveals the writer's views of public policy, as modified by this important event. Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. iii. p. 123. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 415–417.

TO THE PRESIDENT.

Philadelphia, 13 January, 1800.

We have by the President's direction considered Mr. Randolph's letter,[1] and we are of opinion that the public interest requires that the contemptuous language therein adopted requires a public censure.

If such addresses to the Chief Magistrate remain unnoticed, we are apprehensive that a precedent will be established, which must necessarily destroy the ancient, respectable, and urbane usages of this country.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.
OLIVER WOLCOTT.
JAMES MCHENRY.
BEN. STODDERT.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Philadelphia, 10 March, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the favor of your letter of the 27th of last month, and feel myself much interested in the subject of it. Mr. Stoddert had before shown me your letter to him, and to your son, and I had consented to the idea suggested in them. The navy, however, is a scene of momentous responsibility to me; and if a ship should be lost by any man for whom I shall have made myself thus exclusively answerable, you know what candid constructions will be put upon your old friend and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO BENJAMIN LINCOLN.

Philadelphia, 10 March, 1800.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I have this morning received your favor of the 3d, and rejoice in the recovery of your usual health, and pray that it may continue many years.

[1] Mr. John Randolph's letter to the President, attempting to make him responsible for certain alleged insults received by him at the Theatre from officers of the marine corps, was the first act which gave him any notoriety in the country. The Attorney-General, who did not sign the above opinion, seems to have furnished the draught of the message finally sent to the House of Representatives, simply referring the letter, as a question of privilege, to that body.

When I came into office, it was my determination to make as few removals as possible — not one from personal motives, not one from party considerations. This resolution I have invariably observed. Conviction of infidelity to a trust cannot be resisted, and gross misconduct in office ought not to be overlooked. The representations to me of the daily language of several officers at Portsmouth, were so evincive of aversion, if not hostility, to the national Constitution and government, that I could not avoid making some changes. Mr. Whipple is represented as very artful in imputing individual misfortunes to measures of administration, and his whole influence to have been employed against the government, and Mr. Whipple must take a more decided part before he can get over the prejudices against him. I never regarded his conduct about the address; but his apology for it is a most miserable excuse. If the officers of government will not support it, who will? I have no ill will to Mr. Whipple, and no prejudice against him, but I still think his removal was right.

With great sincerity, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Philadelphia, 31 March, 1800.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of the Navy to employ some of his clerks in preparing a catalogue of books for the use of his office. It ought to consist of all the best writings in Dutch, Spanish, French, and especially in English, upon the theory and practice of naval architecture, navigation, gunnery, hydraulics, hydrostatics, and all branches of mathematics subservient to the profession of the sea. The lives of all the admirals, English, French, Dutch, or any other nation, who have distinguished themselves by the boldness and success of their navigation, or their gallantry and skill in naval combats. If there are no funds which can be legally applied by the Secretary to the purchase of such a library, application ought to be made to Congress for assistance.

31 March, 1800.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of the Navy to take immediate measures for carrying into execu-

tion the resolution of Congress of the 29th, for presenting to Captain Thomas Truxtun a gold medal, emblematical of the late action between the United States frigate Constellation, of thirty-eight guns, and the French ship of war La Vengeance, of fifty-four, in testimony of the high sense entertained by Congress of his gallantry and good conduct in the above engagement, wherein an example was exhibited by the captain, officers, sailors, and mariners, honorable to the American name, and instructive to its rising navy.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 31 March, 1800.

The President of the United States requests the Secretary of War to send him, without delay, a list of the officers of the army, who were appointed during the last recess of the Senate of the United States, that the President may be enabled to make their nominations, as the Constitution requires.

31 March, 1800.

The President of the United States requests of the Secretary of War immediate information, whether the commissions have been sent to all the officers of the army or not, and if not, how many remain to be sent.

THOMAS JOHNSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Georgetown, 8 April, 1800.

I shall make no excuse, my dear Sir, for writing to you with frankness. You may judge, from the resolution I have taken up of entering again the field of political contention, if I have credit enough to be carried there, that I am strongly impressed with the idea that we are at an awful crisis.

If our bark was gliding under a pleasant breeze, and the crew ready and disposed to join their efforts for a happy navigation, your age and services would entitle you to quit the tiller and take repose, which I dare say you would willingly do. But former services, in my opinion, lay you under new obligations, which cannot consistently be dispensed with, nor honorable means neglected which may continue you in a situation to be

eminently useful. There is a great deal yet to be done to prevent our becoming a mere satellite of a mighty power.

Persuaded that your being in the city this summer, and as much as you well can, will strengthen and probably extend the favorable sentiment entertained of you, I entreat you at least to visit us. I feel something of selfishness in this request. A personal interview with you would be highly gratifying to me. The men of '74 are grown scarce. How much, then, ought such a rarity to be valued, when recommended by intrinsic worth!

I am, &c.

THOMAS JOHNSON.

TO THOMAS JOHNSON.

Philadelphia, 11 April, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I received this morning your favor of the 8th from Georgetown, with all the pleasure that we usually receive from seeing the face of an old friend, long esteemed, respected, and beloved. I envy you, however, that vivacity of youth with which you write, and even that firm and steady hand, which appears in every character.

For my own part, I see no immediate prospect of an awful crisis more terrifying than I have constantly beheld for forty years. From the year 1760 to this moment has appeared one uniform state of doubt, uncertainty, and danger, to me.

Repose is desirable enough for me, but I have been so long a stranger to it, that I know not whether I should not find it a mortal enemy.

I know of nothing that would give me more pleasure than to meet you; but whether it will be possible for me to be in the city before November, I know not. If any services I can render will be useful, I neither want a disposition to render, nor, I hope, resolution to suffer under them. I am weary, and so are all men at my age, whether in public or private life. I agree perfectly with you, that a great deal is yet to be done to prevent our becoming a mere satellite to a mighty power. But I will candidly confess to you, I sometimes doubt which is that mighty power. I think there is danger from two. Nothing could give me more joy than your resolution to come again upon the stage, because I know your noble nature so well that

it is impossible you should be the dupe of either. It will always give me pleasure to hear of your welfare, as I am, with great and sincere esteem, ancient and modern, your friend, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, 23 April, 1800.

GENTLEMEN, — The President of the United States proposes to the heads of department a subject, which, although at first view it may appear of inconsiderable moment, will upon more mature reflection be found to be of some difficulty, but of great importance to the honor, dignity, and consistency of the government.

In every government of Europe, I believe, there is a gazette in the service of the government, and a printer appointed, acknowledged, and avowed by it — in every regular government, at least. The Gazette of France, before the revolution, answered the same purpose with the London Gazette in England. Mr. Strahan is appointed the King's printer by patent, and is the editor of the London Gazette. This Gazette is said by lawyers and judges to be *primâ facie* evidence in courts of justice, of matters of State and of public acts of the government. As it is published by the authority of the crown, it is the usual way of notifying such acts to the public, and therefore is entitled to credit in respect to such matters. It is a high misdemeanor to publish any thing as from royal authority which is not so. The Gazette is evidence of the King's proclamations; even the articles of war, printed by the King's printer, are good evidence of those articles. Addresses of the subjects, in bodies or otherwise, to the King, and his answers, are considered as matters of State when published in the Gazette, and are proved by it, *primâ facie*, in the King's courts in Westminster Hall. The Gazette is said to be an authoritative means of proving all acts relating to the King and the State. Justice Buller asserts, that every thing which relates to the King, as King of Great Britain, &c., is in its nature public, and that a gazette which contains any thing done by his Majesty in his character of King, or which has passed through his Majesty's hands, is admissible evidence in a court of law to prove such thing. Without running a parallel between

the President of the United States and the King of England, it is certain that the honor, dignity, and consistency of government is of as much importance to the people in one case as the other. The President must issue proclamations, articles of war, articles of the navy, and must make appointments in the army, navy, revenue, and other branches of public service; and these ought all to be announced by authority in some acknowledged gazette. The laws ought to be published in the same. It is certain that a President's printer must be restrained from publishing libels, and all paragraphs offensive to individuals, public bodies, or foreign nations; but need not be forbid advertisements. The gazette need not appear more than once or twice a week. Many other considerations will occur to the minds of the secretaries. The President requests their opinion,

1. Whether a printer can be appointed by the President, either with or without the advice and consent of the Senate?

2. Whether a printer can be obtained, without salary or fees, for the profit which might be made by such a gazette?

3. Where shall we find such a printer?

It is certain that the present desultory manner of publishing the laws, acts of the President, and proceedings of the Executive departments, is infinitely disgraceful to the government and nation, and in all events must be altered.[1]

J. MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR, TO JOHN ADAMS.

War Department, 6 May, 1800.

SIR, — I have the honor to request that I may be permitted to resign the office of secretary of the department of war, and

[1] The only reply to these questions found among Mr. Adams's papers, is from Mr. McHenry. Whilst he favors the idea that a public printer should be appointed, he doubts the power of the President to establish any such officer with a fixed compensation. All that can be done by the government, would be to allow some private printer to call himself *printer to the President*, and to give him from the several departments such work as belonged to each, at the established prices. "A better plan, particularly in view of the proposed removal to the new seat of government, the city of Washington, where no printer is understood to reside, would be that a law should be passed authorizing the President to appoint from time to time some fit, trusty, and discreet person, as printer to the United States, whose duty it should be to print the laws, &c., to be paid either by a fixed compensation, or according to the work done."

The want of such an organ has been felt by the government from that day to this, but none has ever yet been formally established.

that my resignation be accepted, to take place on the first day of June next.

Explanations may be desired of some parts of the business of the war department, while under my direction, which I shall be very ready to give, and can more conveniently do so by continuing in an official situation until the period mentioned. I shall esteem myself particularly favored by your inquiries relative to any subject connected with my official duties, because I shall then have an opportunity to lay before you full information of what I have done or directed, together with the reasons and motives, known best to myself, which induced particular measures.

Having discharged the duties of Secretary of War for upwards of four years with fidelity, unremitting assiduity, and to the utmost of my abilities, I leave behind me all the records of the department, exhibiting the principles and manner of my official conduct, together with not a few difficulties I have had to encounter. To these written documents I cheerfully refer my reputation as an officer and a man.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

JAMES MCHENRY.

[1] Much has been said respecting the causes of Mr. McHenry's involuntary resignation. That he expected a dismission six months sooner, is tolerably clear from his own letter printed in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. p. 282. That he had merited it much earlier, is now proved by the concurring testimony of those who cried out the most loudly against it, when it happened. So early as July, 1798, Mr. Hamilton described him as "wholly insufficient for his place, with the additional misfortune of not having the least suspicion of the fact." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 333. In April preceding, Mr. R. G. Harper had prevailed upon the President to consent to invite Mr. Hamilton himself to occupy the post. "The army, *under proper direction*, will put arms into the hands of all our friends." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 282. Mr. Hamilton's answer is not given, but, in the letter to General Washington already quoted, he admits that Mr. McHenry owed his place to Mr. Adams's forbearance.

"The insufficiency is so great as to leave no probability that the business of the war department can make any tolerable progress in his hands. This has been long observed, and has been more than mentioned to the President by members of Congress. He is not insensible, I believe, that the execution of the department does not produce the expected results; but the case is of course delicate and embarrassing."

General Washington in reply says:

"Your opinion respecting the unfitness of a certain gentleman for the office he holds, accords with mine; and it is to be regretted, *sorely*, at this time, that these opinions are so well founded. I early discovered, after he entered upon the duties of his office, that his talents were unequal to great exertions or deep resources. In truth they were not expected; for the fact is, it was a Hobson's choice." *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 337.

TO T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 10 May, 1800.

Sir, — As I perceive a necessity of introducing a change in the administration of the office of State, I think it proper to make this communication of it to the present Secretary of State, that he may have an opportunity of resigning, if he chooses. I should wish the day on which his resignation is to take place, to be named by himself. I wish for an answer to this letter,

This letter is not found in Mr. Sparks's collection, for the reason given in a note to vol. xi. p. 285.

Mr. Wolcott is not a whit more equivocal in his opinion. See two letters in Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 101, 315, and another more decided still, not printed by Mr. Gibbs, in *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 406.

The propriety of the removal being thus established by the evidence of those claiming to be Mr. McHenry's best friends, and independently of a still more serious question touching his abuse of his confidential relation with the President, the only matter remaining to be considered is the secondary one of the mode in which it was done. Mr. Hamilton has already explained the difficulty attending Mr. McHenry's utter unconsciousness of his insufficiency; an unconsciousness strikingly visible in his letters after his dismission. It is clear that he was a man who could not take a hint. In all probability this it was, that gradually brought on the personal harshness which terminated his career. It must be admitted that Mr. Adams was neither so considerate nor so dignified in his case as he was in that of Mr. Pickering. But the object once effected, he seems to have been the first to regret that it had not been more gently done. To this Mr. Wolcott, with all his secret malevolence to Mr. Adams, unequivocally testifies. Whilst, in a secret letter to Mr. McHenry, he instigates him to disclose to Mr. Hamilton, for use in his projected pamphlet against Mr. Adams, the details of the private conversation during the conference that led to the dismissal, in another letter to him of the same day, designed for public use, to protect him in case he was attacked on the score of incompetency, he says: —

"Soon after your intended retirement from the department of war was made known to me, I waited on the President of the United States on business relating to the treasury, when the subject of your resignation was voluntarily mentioned by him.

"The President said that he considered you a gentleman of agreeable manners, of extensive information, and great industry; that he verily believed your hands were pure, meaning thereby, as I understood him, that he reposed entire confidence in your integrity; that he was happy in understanding that your circumstances were affluent, and that the loss of your late office would not distress your family; and that if any suitable office should become vacant, he should with pleasure confer it on you." Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 410.

Recent disclosures clearly prove that Mr. McHenry had not merited this generosity. He certainly was one, though the least important, of the three cabinet ministers who were untrue to him, and who betrayed his confidence. Neither does this testimony of Mr. Wolcott seem to have softened his rancor. He furnished Mr. Hamilton with a part of the confidential matter used by him in his pamphlet, and he entered warmly into the cabal to defeat Mr. Adams's reëlection. It is, however, no more than due to him to add that, of all the parties to it, his letters betray the most profound sense of the degrading measures they resorted

on or before Monday morning, because the nomination of a successor must be sent to the Senate as soon as they sit.

With esteem, I am, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

T. PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Department of State, Philadelphia, 12 May, 1800.

SIR, — I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated last Saturday, stating that, "as you perceive a necessity of introducing a change in the administration of the office of State, you think it proper to make this communication of it to the present Secretary of State, that he may have an opportunity of resigning, if he chooses;" and that "you would wish the day on which his resignation is to take place to be named by himself."

Several matters of importance in the office, in which my agency will be useful, will require my diligent attention until about the close of the present quarter. I had, indeed, contemplated a continuance in office until the 4th of March next; when, if Mr. Jefferson were elected President, (an event which, in your conversation with me last week, you considered as certain,) I expected to go out, of course. An apprehension of that event first led me to determine not to remove my family this year to the city of Washington; because to establish them there would oblige me to incur an extraordinary expense which I had not the means of defraying; whereas, by separating myself from my family, and living there eight or nine months with strict economy, I hoped to save enough to meet that expense, should the occasion occur. Or, if I then went out of office, *that saving*

to. He designates their conduct as "tremulous, timid, feeble, deceptive, and cowardly. They write private letters. To whom? To each other." . . . . . "They meditate in private. Can good come out of such a system? If the party recovers its pristine energy and splendor, shall I ascribe it to such cunning, paltry, indecisive, back-door conduct?"

For the evidence to sustain all these views, drawn exclusively from the parties implicated, see O. Wolcott's private letter to J. McHenry, 26 August, 1800, in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. p. 409. Also his public letter of the same date, inclosed in the other, p. 410, which must also be compared with the letter to Hamilton, p. 416. Also McHenry to Wolcott, in the same work, vol. ii. pp. 384–385, 413.

would enable me to subsist my family a few months longer, and perhaps aid me in transporting them into the woods, where I had land, though all wild and unproductive, and where, like my first ancestor in New England, I expected to commence a settlement on *bare creation*. I am happy that I now have this resource, and that those most dear to me have fortitude enough to look at the scene without dismay, and even without regret. Nevertheless, after deliberately reflecting on the overture you have been pleased to make to me, I do not feel it to be my duty to resign.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Philadelphia, 12 May, 1800.

SIR, — Divers causes and considerations, essential to the administration of the government, in my judgment, requiring a change in the department of State, you are hereby discharged from any further service as Secretary of State.[1]

JOHN ADAMS,
President of the United States.

[1] This letter closes the official relations of Mr. Pickering to the President. Construing his duty as a cabinet officer as consistent with a singular latitude in secretly counteracting the policy and betraying the purposes of his chief, he seems at the same time, by his refusal to resign, and his complaints afterwards, to have overlooked the doctrine which he himself laid down less than three years before. In his letter to Mr. Monroe, of the 24th July, 1797, he says, among many other things quite applicable to his own case; —

"Again, the want of confidence, from whatever cause it may arise, is a good reason for changing a diplomatic agent. If he is found on experience to be deficient in judgment, skill, or diligence, or if circumstances inspire a reasonable doubt of the sincerity of his views, he cannot with prudence be continued, for it is essential that there should be full confidence in him."

Much was said in many of the writings of the time, and Mr. Jefferson alludes to it often in his letters, of the want of system of Mr. Adams's administration. The cause of much of this difficulty is now clearly to be traced to these cabinet officers, who were never really disposed to coöperate with the chief, but were constantly acting under an opposite influence from without. The accession of Messrs. Marshall and Dexter to the cabinet marks a restoration of system and harmonious action.

Many years after this removal of Mr. Pickering, that gentleman, in undertaking to account for the act, labored to prove the existence of unworthy motives for it in Mr. Adams. And Mr. Gibbs, in his late partisan work, though manifestly betraying his own disbelief of them, has not abstained from recording them. "As charges," he says, "they are at any rate matter of history." What

TO J. M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 15 May, 1800.

SIR, — I request you to transmit copies of the law for reducing the twelve regiments, which passed yesterday, to Major-Generals Hamilton and Pinckney, and also to the commandants of brigades, with orders to the major-generals to make immediate arrangements for reducing those regiments on the fourteenth day of June.

I pray you, also, in concert with the Secretary of the Treasury, to make seasonable preparation for punctual compliance with the other provision of the law, by advancing the three months' pay to the officers and men.

TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, AND THE DISTRICT-ATTORNEY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Philadelphia, 16 May, 1800.

I transmit you a copy of the resolution of the Senate of the United States, passed in Congress on the 14th of this month, by which I am requested to instruct the proper law officers to commence and carry on a prosecution against William Duane, editor of a newspaper called the Aurora, for certain false, defamatory, scandalous, and malicious publications in the said newspaper of the 19th of February last past, tending to defame the Senate of the United States, and to bring them into contempt and disrepute, and to excite against them the hatred of the good people of the United States. In compliance with this request, I now instruct you, gentlemen, to commence and carry on the prosecution accordingly.

With great esteem, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

sort of history that would be, which is made up of unfounded charges against public men anywhere, and especially in America, it is easy to comprehend. In the present instance, the whole of them are swept away by the letter of Mr. Stoddert, 27th October, 1811, giving many particulars respecting the causes assigned for the removal, and by those of Robert and of Samuel Smith, the parties implicated by Mr. Pickering, 30th November, 1st December, 1811, which are inserted in their places in the tenth volume. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 353.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Philadelphia, 17 May, 1800.

Sir, — I thank you for your report of the 16th of this month, and for your early attention to the important subject of the loan. I have subscribed, and send you herewith, an authorization to borrow to the amount of the law; but if the public exigencies can be satisfied with a part of it, your own public spirit of economy will induce you to confine yourself to such part.

The rate of interest is a subject of great anxiety to me. When I recollect that I borrowed for this country near a million sterling, at a rate of interest at from four and a half to six per cent., or thereabout, more than fifteen years ago, when this nation had not two thirds of its present population, when it had a very feeble government, no revenue, no taxes, by barely pledging the faith of the people, which faith has been most punctually and religiously kept, I cannot but suspect that some advantage is taken of this government by demanding exorbitant interest. As Great Britain, with her immense burdens, after so long and wasting a war, is able to borrow at a more moderate interest, I entertain a hope that we may at last abate somewhat of a former interest.

As I know your zeal for the interest of your country to be equal to my own, I have entire confidence in your exertions, that we may take up as little as possible of the sum, and at as low an interest as can be obtained.

TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, 20 May, 1800.

1. Among the three criminals under sentence of death, is there any discrimination in the essential circumstances of their cases, which would justify a determination to pardon or reprieve one or two, and execute the other?

2. Is the execution of one or more so indispensably demanded by public justice and by the security of the public peace, that mercy cannot be extended to all three, or any two, or one?

3. Will the national Constitution acquire more confidence in the minds of the American people by the execution than by the pardon of one or more of the offenders?

4. Is it clear beyond all reasonable doubt that the crime of which they stand convicted, amounts to a levying of war against the United States, or, in other words, to treason?

5. Is there any evidence of a secret correspondence or combination with other anti-federalists of any denomination in other States in the Union, or in other parts of this State, to rise in force against the execution of the law for taxing houses, &c., or for opposing the commissioners in general in the execution of their offices?

6. *Quo animo* was this insurrection? Was it a design of general resistance to all law, or any particular law? Or was it particular to the place and persons?

7. Was it any thing more than a riot, high-handed, aggravated, daring, and dangerous indeed, for the purpose of a rescue? This is a high crime, but can it strictly amount to treason?

8. Is there not great danger in establishing such a construction of treason, as may be applied to every sudden, ignorant, inconsiderate heat, among a part of the people, wrought up by political disputes, and personal or party animosities?

9. Will not a career of capital executions for treason, once opened, without actual bloodshed or hostility against any military force of government, inflict a deep wound in the minds of the people, inflame their animosities, and make them more desperate in sudden heats, and thoughtless riots in elections, and on other occasions where political disputes run high, and introduce a more sanguinary disposition among them?

10. Is not the tranquillity in the western counties, since the insurrection there, and the subsequent submission to law, a precedent in favor of clemency?

11. Is there any probability that a capital execution will have any tendency to change the political sentiments of the people?

12. Will not clemency have a greater tendency to correct their errors?

13. Are not the fines and imprisonments, imposed and suffered, a sufficient discouragement, for the present, of such crimes?

JOHN ADAMS.

May not the long imprisonment of Fries, the two solemn, awful trials, his acknowledgment of the justice of his sentence, his professions of deep repentance, and promises of obedience, be accepted, and turned more to the advantage of government and the public peace, than his execution?

THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT TO THE PRESIDENT.

Philadelphia, 20 May, 1800.

Having considered the questions proposed by the President for our consideration, we respectfully submit the following opinions.

That the intent of the insurgents in Pennsylvania, in 1798, was to prevent the execution of the law, directing the valuation of houses and lands, and the enumeration of slaves, in the particular district of country where they resided. That we know of no combination in other States, and presume that no combination, pervading the whole State of Pennsylvania, was actually formed. We believe, however, that if the government had not adopted prompt measures, the spirit of insurrection would have rapidly extended.

We are of opinion that the crime committed by Fries, Heyney, and Getman, amounted to treason, and that no danger can arise to the community from the precedents already established by the judges upon this subject. We cannot form a certain judgment of the effect upon public opinion, of suffering the law to have its course, but we think it must be beneficial, by inspiring the well disposed with confidence in the government, and the malevolent and factious with terror.

The Attorney-General and the Secretary of the Navy, however, believe that the execution of one will be enough to show the power of the laws to punish, and may be enough for example, the great end of punishment, and that Fries deserves most to suffer; because, though all are guilty, and all have forfeited their lives to the justice of their country, he was the most distinguished in the commission of the crime. The Secretary of the Treasury perceives no good ground for any distinction in the three cases, and he believes that a discrimination, instead of being viewed as an act of mercy, would too much resemble

a sentence against an unfortunate individual. He also believes that the mercy of government has been sufficiently manifested by the proceedings of the Attorney of the United States, and that the cause of humanity will be most effectually promoted by impressing an opinion that those who are brought to trial, and convicted of treason, will not be pardoned.

CHARLES LEE,
OLIVER WOLCOTT.
BEN. STODDERT.

The Attorney-General and Secretary of the Navy beg leave to add, as their opinion, that it will be more just and more wise that all should suffer the sentence of the law, than that all should be pardoned.

BEN. STODDERT.
CHARLES LEE.

TO C. LEE, SECRETARY OF STATE, *PRO TEM.*

Philadelphia, 21 May, 1800.

SIR, — I received yesterday the opinion of yourself, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of the Navy, on the case of the prisoners under sentence of death for treason, formed, as I doubt not, under the full exercise of integrity and humanity. Nevertheless, as I differ in opinion, I must take on myself alone the responsibility of one more appeal to the humane and generous natures of the American people.

I pray you, therefore, to prepare for my signature, this morning, a pardon for each of the criminals, John Fries, Frederic Heyney, and John Getman.[1]

I pray you, also, to prepare the form of a proclamation of a general pardon of all treasons, and conspiracies to commit treasons, heretofore committed in the three offending counties,

[1] "Fries, it is said, opened a tin-ware store in Philadelphia, where, profiting by the custom his notoriety drew to him, he acquired a respectable fortune, and a respectable character." Wharton's *State Trials*, &c., p. 648, note.

For the pardon of Fries, Mr. Adams was attacked by Mr. Hamilton and his friends as guilty of "a virtual dereliction of the friends of the government." Posterity may perhaps judge that it was more wise, as well as humane, to save the criminal for a respectable life, selling tin-ware, than to make of him a political martyr, and a precedent for vindictive retribution.

in opposition to the law laying taxes on houses, &c., that tranquillity may be restored to the minds of those people, if possible.

I have one request more; that you would consult the judge, and the late and present attorneys of this district, concerning the circumstances of guilt and punishment of those now under sentence for fines and imprisonment, and report to me a list of the names of such, if there are any, as may be proper objects of the clemency of government.

With great esteem, I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 22 May, 1800.

Inclosed is a copy of a letter received this morning from Colonel Smith. I am at present at a loss to judge of it. Will you be so kind, without favor or affection, as to give me your candid opinion of it? Whether his request can be granted, in the whole or in part, without injustice to other officers; and whether it is consistent with the military ideas. I pray your answer as soon as possible.[1]

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO W. S. SMITH.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Upon the receipt of your letter of the 21st, I sent a copy of it to General Hamilton, and the original to Mr. McHenry, and asked their candid opinion of it, without favor or affection. From General Hamilton I have as yet received no answer. From Mr. McHenry I have the inclosed, which is, I believe, a very honest answer; and, although I am not of his opinion in all points, I think there is enough in it to convince

[1] A letter to the same purport was sent to the Secretary of War.
Mr. Hamilton's answer is found in the collection of his works, vol. v. p. 480. Colonel Smith had solicited to be appointed to the command of the second regiment of artillerists and engineers, and to be allowed the selection of a major and full battalion of men from his actual command, to complete the regiment.

you that it would be highly improper in me, and therefore impossible, to adopt your project.[1]

I am, with affection to Mrs. Smith and Miss Caroline, sincerely yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO BENJAMIN STODDERT.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1800.

SIR,— I hereby request you on the 1st of June, or whenever Mr. McHenry shall leave the war office, to take upon you the charge of that office, and I hereby invest you with full power and authority to exercise all the functions of secretary of the department of war, and charge you with all the duties and obligations attached by law to that officer, until a successor regularly appointed and commissioned shall appear to relieve you.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

B. STODDERT TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1800.

SIR,— I have the honor of your direction of this day's date, for me to take upon myself the charge of the war office, and to exercise all the functions of secretary of the department of war, from the first day of June, or from the time Mr. McHenry shall leave the office, until a successor regularly appointed and commissioned shall appear to relieve me; which I shall attend to with great cheerfulness, but under the hope that I may be soon relieved from the duties enjoined me.

I have the honor to be &c., &c.

BEN. STODDERT.

[1] Mr. McHenry doubted the power of the President to make the appointment, for the reasons expressed in a former letter. Moreover, although speaking highly of Colonel Smith, as an officer of infantry, he questioned the fitness of transferring him to the command of a corps of artillery. This last argument seems to have decided the point. See vol. viii. pp. 632, 647.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 20 June, 1800.

Sir, — The itinerant life I have led[1] has prevented me from acknowledging the receipt of your favor of May 24th till this time. Your sentiments are very satisfactory to me, and will be duly attended to. I anticipate criticism in every thing which relates to Colonel Smith; but criticism, now criticized so long, I regard no more than "Great George's birth-day song." Colonel Smith served through the war with high applause of his superiors. He has served, abroad in the diplomatic corps, at home as marshal and supervisor, and now as commandant of a brigade. These are services of his own, not mine. His claims are his own. I see no reason or justice in excluding him from all service, while his comrades are all ambassadors or generals, merely because he married my daughter.[2] I am, &c.

John Adams.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 11 July, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I received only last night your favor of the 30th June. There is no part of the administration of our government which has given me so much discontent as the negotiation in the Mediterranean, our ill success in which I attribute to the diffidence of the agents and ministers employed in them, in soliciting aid from the English and the French and the Prussians. M. D'Engestrom has too much reason to reproach us,

[1] Mr. Adams had been on a visit to Washington, the proposed seat of government.

[2] Colonel Smith was soon afterwards appointed surveyor and inspector for the port of New York. The propriety of embracing or of excluding relatives in the consideration of appointments to office, opens questions upon which persons may honestly differ in opinion. One rule has been adopted by some, and another by others, of the Presidents. Mr. Adams followed one, and his son the other. There can be no doubt in cases of the selection of unworthy or incompetent persons. And every President who assumes the responsibility of appointing a relation, subjects the fitness of his choice to a severe scrutiny. Considered in this light, Mr. Adams is responsible for the transfer of his son, John Quincy Adams, from one diplomatic mission to another, for the appointments given to Colonel Smith, and for the selection of his wife's nephew, William Cranch, to be chief justice of the Circuit Court of the district of Columbia.

or to commiserate us, for paying the triple of the sums given by Sweden and Denmark. As, however, the promises of the United States, although made to their hurt, ought to be fulfilled with good faith, I know not how far we can accede to the proposition of uniting with Sweden and Denmark, or appointing, in concert with them and others, convoys for their and our trade. Convoys for our own trade I suppose we may appoint at any time, and in any seas, to protect our commerce, according to our treaties and the law of nations. If, indeed, the Barbary powers, or any of them, should break their treaties with us, and recommence hostilities on our trade, we may then be at liberty to make any reasonable arrangement with Sweden or Denmark. You will be at no loss to instruct Mr. Adams to give a polite and respectful answer to Mr. D'Engestrom, according to these principles, if you approve them.[1]

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 23 July, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I received this morning your favor of the 12th, and thank you for the summary of the stations and destinations of the navy. At the same time I received your other letter of the same date, and have read all its inclosures, which I return with this. Nothing affects me so much as to see complaints against officers who have distinguished themselves by their vigilance, activity, and bravery in the service, as Maley has done; but the complaints must not be rejected without inquiry. I leave this business to your wisdom, as well as the other complaints against other officers.

The transgression of the British captain in opening the letters of Dr. Stevens to Captain Talbot, can be redressed only by a representation to the court of St. James, where so many circumstances of justification, or excuse, or palliation will occur, that I doubt whether it is expedient to take any trouble about it. If you think otherwise, you may furnish the Secretary of State with copies, and he may instruct Mr. King to acquaint the

[1] This proposition to unite with Sweden and Denmark in keeping a naval force in the Mediterranean for the protection of the trade of the three nations, had been made by Count d'Engestrom, through Mr. J. Q. Adams, at Berlin.

ministry with them. It is not worth while to make any vehement representation about it.[1]

With great respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO S. DEXTER, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 25 July, 1800.

I received last night, and read with great pleasure, your letter of the 16th of July. I am very much pleased with your plan for executing the existing laws for the instruction of the artillerists and engineers. I am very ready to appoint the whole number of cadets provided for by law, namely, two for each company, or sixty-four in all, as soon as proper candidates present themselves; and the whole of the four teachers and two engineers, if you are prepared to recommend suitable persons. It is my desire that you take the earliest measures for providing all the necessary books, instruments, and apparatus, authorized by law, for the use and benefit of the artillerists and engineers. I think with you that it will be prudent to begin by appointing two teachers and an engineer, and I pray you to make inquiry for proper characters, and to take measures to induce young men to enter the service as cadets, collect them together, and form a regular school, and cause the battalions to be instructed in rotation at some regular stations. You may assure the cadets, that, in future, officers will be taken from the most deserving of their members, if any should be found fit for an appointment.

I agree with the Secretary of the Navy, that it would be highly useful to the navy, that midshipmen be admitted into the school by courtesy. Yet there ought to be a school on board every frigate. Thirty persons have been taught navigation, and other sciences connected with the naval service, on board the Boston during her first cruise.

I wish you may easily find teachers. What think you of Captain Barron for one? Every one speaks well of Mr. Bureau de Pusy. But I have an invincible aversion to the appoint-

[1] Mr. Stoddert had expressed the opinion that this act of the British Captain "appeared one of those things, difficult to condemn, and still more difficult to justify." "His letters did not show him to be a man of much understanding."

ment of foreigners, if it can be avoided. It mortifies the honest pride of our officers, and damps their ardor and ambition. I had rather appoint the teachers, and form the schools, and take time to consider of an engineer.[1]

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 30 July, 1800.

I have received your favor of the 21st, and have read the respectable recommendations inclosed, in favor of Mr. Lloyd Beal and Mr. Bent Bowlings to be marshal of Maryland. I return all these letters to you in this. With the advantages of Mr. Thomas Chase, in the opportunity to consult his father and Mr. Martin, I still think that his appointment is as likely to benefit the public as that of any of the respectable candidates would be. Your knowledge of persons, characters, and circumstances, are so much better than mine, and my confidence in your judgment and impartiality so entire, that I pray you, if Mr. Chase should not appear the most eligible candidate to you, that you would give the commission to him whom you may prefer.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 31 July, 1800.

In the night of the 29th, your favor of the 21st was left at my house. Mr. King's letters shall be soon considered. At present I shall confine myself to the despatch from our envoys in France. The impression made upon me by these communications is the same with that which they appear by your letter to have made on you. There are not sufficient grounds on which to form any decisive opinion of the result of the mission. But there are reasons to conjecture that the French government may be inclined to explore all the resources of their diplomatic skill, to protract the negotiation. The campaign in Europe may have some weight, but the progress of the election in America

[1] This is the foundation of the military academy at West Point.

may have much more. There is reason to believe that the communications between the friends of France in Europe and America are more frequent and constant, as well as more secret, than ours; and there is no reason to doubt that the French government is flattered with full assurances of a change at the next election, which will be more favorable to their views. McNeil, it appears, was arrived at Havre the latter part of May. Our envoys will probably insist on definitive and categorical answers, and come home, according to their instructions, either with or without a treaty. On this supposition, we need say no more upon this subject.

Another supposition is, however, possible, and, in order to guard against that, I shall propose to your consideration, and that of the heads of department, the propriety of writing to our envoys, by the way of Holland, and England or Hamburg, or any other more expeditious and certain conveyance. The question is, what we shall write. There are but two points, which appear to me to deserve a further attention, and indeed their present instructions are sufficient upon these heads. I always expected that our envoys would be hard pressed to revive the old treaty, to save its anteriority, as they say they shall be. I cannot see, however, that we can relax the instruction on that head. Perhaps it may be necessary to repeat and confirm it. The other point relates to a discontinuance of our naval protection of our commerce, and to opening our commerce with France. But we have no official or other authentic information that the French have done any thing to justify or excuse us in the smallest relaxation. And, indeed, nothing they can do, short of a treaty, would justify me in taking one step. I therefore think that our envoys may be instructed to be as explicit as decency and delicacy will admit, in rejecting all propositions of the kind.

I return you all the papers relative to this subject.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 31 July, 1800.

Last night the consul of Spain, Mr. Stoughton, came out to Quincy upon the important errand of delivering to me in my

own hand, according to his own account of his orders, the inclosed letter, demanding of the government a fulfilment of the 5th article of our treaty with Spain.[1] Although I see no sufficient reason in this case for deviating from the ordinary course of business, I shall take no exception to this proceeding on that account, but I desire you to communicate this letter to the Secretary at War, and concert with him the proper measures to be taken. Orders, I think, should be sent to Mr. Hawkins and to General Wilkinson, to employ every means in their power to preserve the good faith according to the stipulation in this 5th article of the treaty with Spain. And I also desire you would write a civil and respectful answer to this letter of the Chevalier, still the minister of the King of Spain, assuring him of the sincere friendship of the government, for the Spanish government and nation, and of our determination to fulfil with perfect good faith the stipulations in the treaty, and informing him that orders have been given, or shall be immediately given, to the officers of the United States, civil or military, to take all the measures in their power for that purpose.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 1 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I have twice read the despatch of Mr. King, No. 67, inclosed in your favor of the 21st of July. I am glad to see that Lord Grenville expressed his opinion, that the new board ought to proceed in a different manner from their predecessors, by deciding cases singly, one after another, instead of attempting to decide by general resolves and in classes.

The idea of paying a gross sum to the British government in lieu of, and in satisfaction for, the claims of the British creditors, seems to me to merit attention and mature deliberation. There will be great difficulties attending it, no doubt. How can we form an estimate that will satisfy the American government and the British government? How shall the claims of British creditors be extinguished or barred from recovery in our courts

[1] For the protection of the Spanish territory from the incursions of the Indians.

of law? Shall the claim of the creditor be transferred to our government, and how? or shall it be a total extinguishment of debt and credit between the parties? How will the British government apportion the sum among the British creditors? This, however, is their affair. You ask an important question, whether such an arrangement can afford just cause of discontent to France. But I think it must be answered in the negative. Our citizens are in debt to British subjects. We surely have a right to pay our honest debts in the manner least inconvenient to ourselves, and no foreign power has any thing to do with it. I think I should not hesitate on this account. The difficulty of agreeing upon a sum is the greatest; but I am inclined to think this may be overcome. If nothing of this kind can be agreed on, and the British government refuse all explanations, I think that good faith will oblige us to try another board; and I have so little objection to the modes of appointing a new board, suggested to Mr. King by our government or by the British government, that I am content to leave it to Mr. King to do the best he can. I shall keep the copy of Mr. King's despatch, No. 67, presuming that you have the original.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 2 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — Last night I received your favor of the 24th of July. The letter to Mr. Adams, dated the 24th of July, I have read, and as I see no reason to desire any alteration in it, I shall give it to General Lincoln, the collector at Boston, to be by him sent to Hamburg or Amsterdam by the first good opportunity.[1] The duplicate and triplicate you may send by such opportunities as may be presented to you. Mr. King's despatches, Nos. 71 and 72, I have read, and, if you think proper, you may authorize Mr. King, if he thinks it proper, to communicate to the court, in any manner he thinks most decent, the

[1] Mr. Marshall had expressed a desire that it should take this course. But he says; —

"I transmit it to you, because there are in it some sentiments further than those contained in your letter. Should you wish any change, be pleased to note it, and return the letter."

congratulations of his government, and, if he pleases, of the President, on the King's fortunate escape from the attempt of an assassin.

The mighty bubble, it seems, is burst, of a projected combination of all the north of Europe against France. This mighty design, which was held up in terror before my eyes to intimidate me from sending envoys to France, is evaporated in smoke. Indeed, I never could hear it urged against the mission to France without laughter.

The jewels for Tunis are a more serious object. When I read over all the despatches from the Barbary States, I remember your predecessor consulted me concerning these jewels. His opinion was, that it was best to make the present, rather than to hazard a rupture. After the expenditure of such great sums, I thought with him that it would be imprudent to hazard an interruption of the peace on account of these jewels, and I presume he wrote to Mr. Eaton or Mr. Smith accordingly. I am still of the same opinion.

I see no objection against requesting Mr. Smith, and all the consuls in the Barbary States, to keep Mr. King informed of the general state of affairs. It will be of service to the public that our minister at London should know as much information as possible concerning our affairs in those countries. I return Mr. King's despatches, 71 and 72.

TO B. STODDERT, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Quincy, 3 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I know not whether the inclosed letter from Lady Catherine Duer has not excited too much tenderness in my feelings, but I cannot refrain from inclosing it to you, and recommending it to your serious consideration. If it is possible, without material injury to the discipline of the navy, to accept of the resignation of this unhappy youth, I pray you to do it. I had almost said that this letter, at first reading, excited as much of a temporary indignation against the captain, for suffering these dinners at St. Kitts, as it has of a permanent pity for an unfortunate family. Captain Little has returned without

the loss of a man by sickness, and with a ship in perfect health, only by keeping always at sea.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 6 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — In answer to your letter of the 26th of July, I have to inform you that although you omitted to inclose to me the letter from John Cowper, Esquire, as you intended, yet as there are no candidates for the office, that I know of, that ought to excite any hesitation, I am well satisfied that you should apply to the Secretary of State for commissions for Mr. Claude Thompson, to be collector of the customs, for the district of Brunswick in Georgia, and inspector of the revenue for said port, provided you are satisfied with Mr. Cowper's recommendation.

To show you the passions that are continually excited by the appointments and dismissions we are so often obliged to make, I inclose a letter I received last night from Mr. Jabez Bowen at Augusta. Such are the reproaches to which the most upright actions of our lives are liable![1]

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 7 August, 1800.

I have just received your favor of July 29th. The merit of Judge Chase, of which I have been a witness at times for six and twenty years, are very great in my estimation, and if his sons are as well qualified as others, it is quite consistent with my principles to consider the sacrifices and services of a father

[1] Just at this time, the officer to whom this letter was addressed, was engaging in the preparation of the materials for the use of Mr. Hamilton in the deliberate attack he was meditating upon Mr. Adams. Mr. Hamilton's letter inviting him to execute this task, and his reply, disclose the motives of the actors not less than their sense of the moral obstacles in their way. They also establish the fact that the shape of the attack was the result of cool and concerted hostility, rather than the impulse of self-defence under which it is declared to have been made. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 397, 416.

in weighing the pretensions of a son. The old gentleman will not last very long, and it can hardly be called accumulating offices in a family to appoint the son of a judge of the United States marshal of a particular State. However, I have so much deference for the opinion of Mr. Stoddert, especially in an appointment in his own State, that I will wave my own inclination in favor of his judgment, and consent to the appointment of Major David Hopkins.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 7 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I inclose to you a letter from Governor Trumbull, of Connecticut, a petition for a pardon from Isaac Williams, in prison at Hartford, for privateering under French colors. His petition is seconded by a number of very respectable people. I inclose many other papers relative to the subject, put into my hands yesterday by a young gentleman from Norwich, his nephew. The man's generosity to American prisoners, his refusal to act, and resigning his command, when he was ordered to capture American vessels, his present poverty and great distress, are arguments in favor of a pardon, and I own I feel somewhat inclined to grant it. But I will not venture on that measure without your advice and that of your colleagues. I pray you to take the opinions of the heads of department upon these papers, and if they advise to a pardon, you may send me one.[1]

With high esteem, &c.

John Adams.

[1] The trial of Isaac Williams is found in Wharton's *State Trials*, &c., pp. 652–658, with a carefully prepared note touching the difficult question of expatriation, which can scarcely yet be pronounced settled in America. Mr. Marshall, in his reply to the above letter, dated the 16th, says; —

"The petition of Isaac Williams, with the accompanying documents, was, in conformity with your direction, laid before the heads of department, and by their unanimous opinion the fines are remitted. I have inclosed his pardon to the marshal for the district of Connecticut."

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 11 August, 1800.

On Saturday I received your favor of the 26th ultimo. The German letter proposing to introduce into this country a company of schoolmasters, painters, poets, &c., all of them disciples of Mr. Thomas Paine, will require no answer. I had rather countenance the introduction of Ariel and Caliban, with a troop of spirits the most mischievous from fairy land. The direction to deliver the Sandwich[1] to the Spanish minister, on the requisition of the King of Spain, as the case is stated, no doubt accurately, in your letter, I believe was right; and it was better to do it promptly, than to wait for my particular orders in a case so plain. Respecting Bowles, I wrote you on the 31st of July, that I thought General Wilkinson and Mr. Hawkins should be written to. I now add that I think the governors of Georgia, Tennessee, and the Mississippi territory should be written to, to employ all the means in their power to preserve the good faith of the United States, according to the fifth article of the treaty with Spain. How far it will be proper to order General Wilkinson to coöperate with the Spanish government or military forces, it will be proper for the heads of department to consider. I can see no objection against ordering them to join in an expedition against Bowles, wherever he may be, in concert with the Spanish forces, at their request. The only danger would arise from misunderstandings and disagreements between the officers or men. In my letter of the 31st ultimo I also requested you to give a civil answer to the Chevalier, assuring him of our sincere friendship for the Spanish government and nation, and of our resolution to fulfil the treaty with good faith. This letter I hope you received.

On the 1st of August I wrote you on the subject of a sum in gross to be paid, instead of going through all the chicanery, which may be practicable under the treaty.[2] I most perfectly agree with you and the heads of department, that the proposition merits serious attention. My only objection to it is one that cannot be seriously mentioned. I am afraid that, as soon

[1] A vessel captured by Captain Talbot in a Spanish port of St. Domingo.
[2] The claims of British subjects under the sixth article of the British treaty.

as this point of dispute is removed, such is their habitual delight in wrangling with us, they will invent some other. Some pretext or other of venting their spleen and ill humor against us they will always find. This, however, cannot be gravely urged as a reason against settling this quarrel. I am willing you should write to Mr. King instructions on this head. Take the opinions, however, of the heads of department on the letter, before you send it. If they are unanimous with you for going as far as a million, in the latitude to be given to Mr. King in the negotiation, I will agree to it.[1]

TO JOHN TRUMBULL.

Quincy, 12 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — A letter from my old friend Trumbull is always so cheering a cordial to my spirits, that I could almost rejoice in the cause which produced yours of the 6th. The gentleman you allude to did, it is true, make me a visit at New Haven. It was not unexpected, for it was not the first or second mark of attention that I have received from him, at the same place. On this occasion his deportment was polite, and his conversation easy, sensible, and agreeable. I understood from him, what I well knew before and always expected, that there had been some uneasiness and some severe criticisms in Connecticut on account of the late removal of the late Secretary of State; but he mentioned no names, nor alluded to persons or places. No such insinuations concerning Hartford, as you have heard, escaped his lips.[2] I had for many years had it in contemplation to take the road of the sea coast, and I believe that for

[1] Mr. Marshall in his reply, dated the 23d, writes; —

"I understand your opinion to be that the explanatory articles, if attainable, are preferred to any other mode of accommodating the differences which produced the dissolution of the board lately sitting at Philadelphia; and that the most eligible mode is the substitution of a sum in gross as a compensation for the claims of the creditors of the United States. On this idea the letter to Mr. King is drawn. For many reasons I am myself decidedly of the same opinion, and I believe there is with respect to it no difference among the heads of department."

[2] Mr. Trumbull had written to know whether the stories in circulation were true, that Mr. Adams had been induced to change his course from Hartford to New London by reason of the representations made by the gentleman referred

many years I have never stopped at New Haven, without making some inquiries concerning the roads and inns. The gentleman in question had just returned from New London, and assured me the road was good, the accommodations at the public houses not bad, and the passage of the ferry neither dangerous nor inconvenient to any but the ferrymen. He added, that he had heard people at several places on that route observe, that I had never seen it, that they wished to see me that way, and that the distance to my own house in Quincy was ten or twelve miles less, than the other. An economy of a dozen miles to an old man, who was already weary with a journey of six or seven hundred miles, was an object of attention, and that way I took. I never entertained nor conceived a suspicion, that I should not meet the same cordial reception at Hartford as usual. There was some conversation concerning constitutions and administration, rather free, but very cool and decent, without any personal or party allusions, which gave me an opinion of the correctness of his judgment, which I had not before. But as these were private conversations, I do not think it necessary, if it could be justifiable, to mention them. Who is it says, in the Old Testament, I will go out and be a lying spirit among them?[2]

With affectionate esteem, dear Sir, your much pained friend,

JOHN ADAMS.

to, of the hostility felt to him at the former place. In this connection Mr. T. says;—

"In fact, had you given Hartford the honor of a visit, you would have been met from all parties with more than usual marks of attention and respect. Many were desirous of convincing you that they did not consider the President's exertion of his constitutional right of displacing a subordinate executive officer, as a matter of national concern; that while they felt no dissatisfaction at the conduct of administration in public and consequential measures, no minute clamors could shake their confidence; and that of the propriety or necessity of the measure, they pretended not at that time to be possessed of the evidence, or the right, which could enable them to judge or decide."

[2] Mr. Adams was not fated to have his own measure meted to him by others. A specimen of the manner in which he was treated, in this very instance, is disclosed in a letter of Chauncey Goodrich to Oliver Wolcott, still Secretary of the Treasury. The writer warns his correspondent, that the person to whom this letter is addressed, described as "our friend Trumbull, remains as firmly as ever attached to his old master." Noah Webster, too, is not well affected to the cabal. Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 411.

TO S. DEXTER, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 13 August, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Last night I received your favor of the 4th, and have read the inclosures, all which I return to you. I will not object to the appointment of Mr. Foncin as one of the three. But I shall not appoint him first as long as Barron lives. If you can find another American mathematician better than Barron, it is well; if not, we will appoint him first teacher. I am well satisfied with the recommendation of Colonel David Vance and willing to appoint him, but I wish you to ask the opinion of Mr. Wolcott. In all business which involves expense, I love to consult the Secretary of the Treasury. My opinion is clear in favor of one commissioner rather than three,[1] and Vance will be enough. I need say nothing about Bloody Fellow,[2] Mr. McHenry,[3] or Mr. Sevier, if we have but one. Would it be worth while to write to Presidents Willard, Dwight, Smith, Ewing, &c., to inquire after young mathematicians?

I am, Sir, with cordial esteem,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 13 August, 1800.

In answer to yours of the 2d, I have agreed to the appointment of Major David Hopkins to be marshal of Maryland, according to the advice of Mr. Stoddert, although it was a great disappointment and mortification to me to lose the only opportunity I shall ever have of testifying to the world the high opinion I have of the merits of a great magistrate by the

[1] To negotiate with the Southern Indians for some land.

[2] An Indian chief, whose evidence had been quoted in this case against Mr. Sevier.

[3] It is a singular fact that Mr. McHenry's name does not appear in Mr. Dexter's letter, among those recommended. The idea of giving him an appointment, mentioned by Mr. Wolcott as at first entertained by the President, seems to have been still cherished. In the meantime that gentleman was stimulating Mr. Wolcott to buckle on his armor, and complaining of everybody in any way attached to Mr. Adams. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 408.

appointment of his son to an office for which he is fully qualified and accomplished.[1]

I agree with you that a letter should be written to the government of Guadaloupe, remonstrating against the treatment of Daniel Tripe and another sailor, and holding up the idea of retaliation. I agree, too, that complaints should be made through Mr. Humphreys to the Spanish court, of the violation of their treaty in the case of Gregory and Pickard of Boston. I return Mr. Sitgreaves's letter received in yours of August 2d.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 14 August, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I received but last night your favor of the 4th. I have read the papers inclosed. 1. The letter from Mr. Robert Waln. 2. The letter from Gid. Hill Wells. 3. The representation of three masters of vessels, Thomas Choate, Robert Forrest, and Knowles Adams, relative to the consulate of Madeira. If there is a necessity of removing Mr. John Marsden Pintard, a native American and an old consul, why should we appoint a foreigner in his stead? Among the number of applications for consulates, cannot we find an American capable and worthy of the trust? Mr. Lamar is a partner in a respectable house, but it is said to be an English, or rather a Scotch house. Why should we take the bread out of the mouths of our own children and give it to strangers? We do so much of this in the army, navy, and especially in the consulships abroad, that it frequently gives me great anxiety. If, however, you know of no American fit for it, who would be glad of it, I shall consent to your giving the commission to Mr. Lamar, for it seems to me, from these last representations, there is a necessity of removing Mr. Pintard.

[1] Judge Samuel Chase. It is curious to notice the bitterness of the feeling indulged in by Mr. McHenry against him and his friends on account of their preference of Mr. Adams to Mr. Pinckney. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 408, 419.

The omission to make this appointment was supplied in another form twenty-seven years afterwards by his son John Quincy Adams, whilst President.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 26 August, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I received last night your letter of the 16th. I am well satisfied with all its contents. The only thing which requires any observation from me, is the proposed instruction to Mr. King. As far as I am able to form a conjecture, five millions of dollars are more than sufficient, provided the British creditors are left at liberty to prosecute in our courts, and recover all the debts which are now recoverable. I agree, however, with the heads of department, that it is better to engage to pay by instalments, or otherwise, as may be agreed, the whole sum, than be puzzled and teased with a new board and two or three years of incessant wrangles. I should be for instructing Mr. King to obtain the lowest sum possible, but to go as far as five millions rather than fail. I wish Mr. King may be furnished with as many reasons as can be thought of for reducing the sum. I pray you to prepare a letter to Mr. King as soon as possible; and as we are all so well agreed in all the principles, I do not think it necessary to transmit it to me. Lay it before the heads of department, and if they approve of it, I certainly shall not disapprove it, and you may send it, if opportunity occurs, without further advice from me. Whether it will be advisable to stipulate for a transfer to the United States of such claims as the British government shall think fit to discharge in consequence of this arrangement, I wish you to consider. I believe it will occasion more trouble, and expense too, than profit.

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 27 August, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Inclosed is a letter from Mr. John C. Jones, of Boston, recommending Captain Joseph Coffin Boyd, to fill the place of Colonel Lunt. Also a letter from Richard Hunnewell, requesting the office for himself. Thus you see we have an ample choice of candidates. Fosdick, Titcomb, Mayo, Boyd, and Hunnewell, all well qualified, and recommended by very respectable men. The last, however, appears to me to have

the best pretensions, though supported by no recommendations. These he might easily obtain, but I think it unnecessary. This gentleman resigned the office of a sheriff of a county, worth fifteen hundred dollars a year, for the sake of an appointment in the late army worth three hundred dollars less. He was lieutenant-colonel commandant of the fifteenth regiment, in the late brigade at Oxford. The public seems to be under some obligation to these gentlemen, who were so suddenly turned adrift. Hunnewell, though very young, was an officer in the army last war, and from his manners, appearance, education, and accomplishments, as well as from the circumstances before mentioned, I think we cannot do better than to appoint him. If you are of the same opinion, you may send him a commission; but if you are aware of any objection or of any reason for preferring any other candidate, I pray you to let me know it, before any appointment is made.

With great esteem.

TO BARNABAS BIDWELL.

Quincy, 27 August, 1800.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 16th, and thank you for the information it contains.[1] A very little reflection, I think, must convince a gentleman of your information, that it would be altogether improper for me to enter into any conversation or correspondence relative to the changes in administration. If a President of the United States has not authority enough to change his own secretaries, he is no longer fit for his office. If he must enter into a controversy in pamphlets and newspapers, in vindication of his measures, he would have employment enough for his whole life, and must neglect the duties and business of his station. Let those who have renounced, all of a sudden, that system of neutrality for which they contended for ten years, justify themselves, if they can.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

John Adams.

[1] Mr. Bidwell had written a letter, requesting an explanation of the grounds of dismission of Mr. Pickering, "not for his own satisfaction," he said, "but for the sake of counteracting injurious impressions."

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 30 August, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I received last night your favor of the 23d. My ideas are perfectly conformable to yours in your instructions to Mr. King, as you state them to me. The explanatory articles, if attainable, are preferable to any other mode. The next most eligible is the substitution of a sum in gross, that sum to be as small as can be agreed to, or will be agreed to, by the British government; but to agree to five millions of dollars, rather than fail of explanations and substitution both, and be compelled to agree to a new board, and all their delays and altercations.

The proposed letters to the governors of Georgia, Tennessee, and Mississippi, will, I presume, be unnecessary.[1] Mr. King's letter of the 5th of July is a melancholy picture of Britain. Alas! how different from that held up to view in this country, twelve months ago, to frighten me from sending to France! However, Mr. King is somewhat of a croaker at times. He is apt to be depressed by what he thinks a train of unfortunate events. There is enough, however, of likeness in his drawing to give great spirits and a high tone to the French. It will be our destiny, for what I know, republicans as we are, to fight the French republic alone. I cannot account for the long delay of our envoys. We cannot depart from our honor, nor violate our faith, to please the heroic consul.[2]

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 4 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favor of August 25th. I am much of your opinion, that we ought not to be surprised, if we see our envoys in the course of a few weeks or days, without a treaty. Nor should I be surprised, if they should be loaded with professions and protestations of love, to serve as a substitute for a treaty. The state of things will be so critical,

[1] To request their aid in keeping the peace among the Indians on the Spanish border.

[2] Bonaparte.

that the government ought to be prepared to take a decided part. Questions of consequence will arise, and, among others, whether the President ought not at the opening of the session to recommend to Congress an immediate and general declaration of war against the French republic. Congress has already, in my judgment, as well as in the opinion of the judges at Philadelphia, declared war within the meaning of the Constitution against that republic, under certain restrictions and limitations. If war in any degree is to be continued, it is a serious question whether it will not be better to take off all the restrictions and limitations. We have had wonderful proofs that the public mind cannot be held in a state of suspense. The public opinion, it seems, must be always a decided one, whether in the right or not. We shall be tortured with a perpetual conflict of parties, and new and strange ones will continually rise up, until we have either peace or war. The question proposed by you is of great magnitude. I pretend not to have determined either, in my own mind; but I wish the heads of department to turn their thoughts to the subject, and view it in all its lights.[1]

The despatches from the Isle of France are unexpected. Four or five parties have in succession had the predominance in that island, and the old governor has gone along with each in its turn. We ought to be cautious on that business. I should prefer Mr. Lamar, so strongly recommended, to any Spaniard or Madeira man. If you can find a sound native American, well qualified, appoint him; if not, I will agree to Mr. Lamar. I will return the papers by a future opportunity.

[1] Mr. Marshall, in his letter, says: —

"The state of the negotiation on the 17th of May, considered in connection with the subsequent military operations of the armies, and with the impression which will probably be made by the New York election, gives the appearance of truth to the intelligence in the papers from St. Sebastian's. We ought not to be surprised, if we see our envoys in the course of the next month, without a treaty. This produces a critical state of things, which ought to be contemplated in time. The question, whether hostilities against France, with the exception of their West India privateers, ought to be continued, if on their part a change of conduct shall be manifest, is of serious and interesting magnitude, and is to be viewed in a variety of aspects."

Mr. Wolcott's tone on this subject may be gathered from his very remarkable letter of the 3d September to Alexander Hamilton. Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 417.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE

Quincy, 5 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I hope, as you do, that the resistance to the execution of the judgment of the courts of the United States in Kentucky, as represented by Judge Harry Innes, exists no longer. I return you all the papers.

Mountflorence's information was, that our envoys "were ready to depart for Havre de Grace, where they intended to embark for the Hague." This was, probably, given out by the French to conceal something from the public. What that something was, you may conjecture as well as I. They would not be anxious to conceal settlement to mutual satisfaction.[1]

I agree with you that very serious, though friendly remonstrances ought to be made to Spain. I can even go as far as you, and demand compensation for every American vessel condemned by the French consular courts in the dominions of Spain. I return all the papers relative to this subject.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 9 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Stevens's letter, inclosed in yours of the 30th, seems to require a proclamation to open the trade between the United States and the ports of St. Domingo, which were lately in the possession of Rigaud, and I am ready to agree to it whenever you and the heads of department shall be satisfied.

Mr. Mitchell, of Charleston, promises great things, and he may be able to perform them, for any thing I know. But I have no intimation that Mr. Boudinot will resign, and I can promise no office beforehand. It has been the constant usage, now twelve years, for the President to answer no letters of solicitation or recommendation for office. I know of no coins of gold better executed than our eagles, nor of silver than our dollars. The motto of the Hôtel de Valentinois, in which I lived at Passy, was, "se sta bene, non si muove." "If you stand

[1] This was a false report. Mr. Wolcott's hopes peep even through his doubts. See his letter to J. McHenry. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 410.

well, stand still." The epitaph, "stava ben, ma por stare meglio, sto qui," "I was well, but by taking too much physic to be better, lo here I lie," is a good admonition. I will not be answerable for the correctness of my Italian, but you see I have an idle morning, or I should not write you this common-place. I return you Mr. Humphreys's letter, and inclose that of Mr. John H. Mitchell, and that of Mr. Stevens.

With sincere regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN TRUMBULL.

Quincy, 10 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your favor of the 4th. Porcupine's gazette, and Fenno's gazette, from the moment of the mission to France, aided, countenanced, and encouraged by *soi-disant* Federalists in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, have done more to shuffle the cards into the hands of the jacobin leaders, than all the acts of administration, and all the policy of opposition, from the commencement of the government. After the house of representatives had unequivocally and unanimously applauded that measure, as they did in their address in answer to the speech at the opening of the last session of Congress, it is arrogance, presumption, and inconsistency, without a parallel, in any to say, as they continue to do, in the newspapers, that the Federalists disapprove it. The jacobins infer from this disapprobation designs in such Federalists, which they are not prepared to avow. These Federalists may yet have their fill at fighting. They may see our envoys without peace; and if they do, what has been lost? Certainly nothing, unless it be the influence of some of the Federalists by their own imprudent and disorganizing opposition and clamor. Much time has been gained. If the election of a Federal President is lost by it, they who performed the exploit will be the greatest losers. They must take the consequences. They will attempt to throw the blame of it upon me, but they will not succeed. They have recorded their own intemperance and indiscretion in characters too legible and too public. For myself, age, infirmities, family misfortunes, have conspired with the unreasonable conduct of

jacobins and insolent Federalists, to make me too indifferent to whatever can happen.

I am, as ever, your affectionate friend.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 18 September, 1800.

I received last night, and have read this morning, the copy of your letter to Mr. King, inclosed in your favor of the 9th. I know not how the subject could have been better digested.[1]

An idea has occurred to me, which I wish you would consider. Ought not something to be said to Mr. King about the other board? That, I mean, in London.[2] We understand it, no doubt, all along, that those commissioners are to proceed, and their awards are to be paid. But should not something be expressed concerning it, in this new arrangement, whether by explanations or a composition for a gross sum? Can it be stipulated that the gross sum, if that should be accepted, should be paid, in whole or in part, to American claimants before the board in London, in satisfaction of awards in their favor? These, perhaps, would loan the money to government, and receive certificates on interest, as the merchants have for ships. I only hint the thing for consideration; am not much satisfied with it.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 27 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I received yesterday the inclosed letter, sent up from Boston, with several others, and large packets which appear to be only newspapers. This is a duplicate of No. 244, from Mr. Humphreys at Madrid, dated 29th July and August 1st. Talleyrand's reply to the French minister says: "In the present state of the negotiation between the United States and France, you may inform Mr. Humphreys that he shall not long have occasion to complain of any more robberies (*brigandages*) com-

[1] This clear and statesmanlike despatch proposed the settlement of the questions under the sixth article of the British treaty by the payment of a gross sum.

[2] That constituted under the seventh article of the same treaty.

mitted under the name of privateering." This sentiment favors your idea in your letter of the 17th, that "the present French government is much inclined to correct, at least in part, the follies of the past."[1] Inclosed is a private letter to me from Mr. King of 28th July, which may reflect some light upon the disposition of the French government about that time. They might be courting or flattering the northern powers into an armed neutrality. The envoys, when they come, will, I hope, be able to clear away all doubts, and show us plainly both our duty and our interest. I return you the three parchments signed as commissions for Clark, Vanderburg, and Griffin, to be judges in the Indiana territory. I wish you a pleasant tour to Richmond, but I pray you to give such orders that, if despatches should arrive from our envoys, they may be kept as secret as the grave till the Senate meets. On Monday, the 13th October, I shall set off from this place. Letters should not be sent to me, to reach this place or Boston after that day. I pray you to turn your reflections to the subject of communications to be made to Congress by the President, at the opening of the session, and give me your sentiments as soon as possible in writing. The Constitution requires that he should give both information and counsel.

I am, Sir, with a sincere attachment,

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] Mr. Marshall had written as follows: —

"It is certainly wise to contemplate the event of our envoys returning without a treaty, but it will very much depend on the intelligence and assurances they may bring, what course sound policy will direct the United States to pursue. I am greatly disposed to think that the present government is much inclined to correct, at least in part, the follies of the past. Of these, perhaps, none were more conspicuous, or more injurious to the French nation, than their haughty and hostile conduct to neutrals. Considerable retrograde steps in this respect have already been taken, and I expect the same course will be continued. Should this expectation not be disappointed, there will be security, at least a reasonable prospect of it, for the future, and there will exist no cause of war, but to obtain compensation for past injuries. This, I am persuaded, will not be deemed a sufficient motive for such a measure."

Mr. Wolcott, at this time, was very differently engaged. Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 430. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 471.

TO S. DEXTER, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 30 September, 1800.

DEAR SIR,— The letter of Mr. King to me of August the 11th, with Bell's Weekly Messenger of August 10th, I inclose to you, because General Marshall, I suppose, will be absent. I pray you to communicate it to the other gentlemen. If the negotiation is terminated upon the stated points, the object is, no doubt, our United States election; but time will show they are directed by superficial advisers. Instead of operating in favor of their man, it will work against him. It is very probable they will send a minister or ministers here, and it behoves us to consider how we shall receive him. There can be no question in America, or at least with the executive authority of government, whether we shall preserve our treaty with Britain with good faith. It is impossible we should violate it, because *impossibile est quod jure impossibile.* I send you a letter also from Mr. Gore of August 8th, and a triplicate from Mr. King of 28th of July. I will thank you to return me these letters.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Quincy, 3 October, 1800.

DEAR SIR,— I have received last night your letter of 24th September. I return you Mr. Adams's letter of 28th of June. The question, whether neutral ships shall protect enemies' property, is indeed important. It is of so much importance, that if the principle of *free ships, free goods,* were once really established and honestly observed, it would put an end forever to all maritime war, and render all military navies useless. However desirable this may be to humanity, how much soever philosophy may approve it and Christianity desire it, I am clearly convinced it will never take place. The dominant power on the ocean will forever trample on it. The French would despise it more than any nation in the world, if they had the maritime superiority of power, and the Russians next to them. We must treat the subject with great attention, and, if all other nations will agree to it, we will. But while one holds out, we

shall be the dupes, if we agree to it. Sweden and Denmark, Russia and Prussia, might form a rope of sand, but no dependance can be placed on such a maritime coalition. We must, however, treat the subject with great respect. If you have received a certificate that the ratifications of the treaty with Prussia are exchanged, should not a proclamation issue, as usual, to publish it? I have read with some care, and great pleasure, your letter to Mr. King of 20th September. I think it very proper that such a letter should be sent, and I am so fully satisfied with the representations and reasonings in it, that I shall give it to General Lincoln, the collector of Boston, to be sent by the first opportunity to London.[1]

TO O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Quincy, 4 October, 1800.

Dear Sir, — Inclosed is a letter from Mr. Daniel Bedinger, with a certificate in his favor from Governor Wood. I suppose this letter comes too late; but that, if it had arrived earlier, it would have made no alteration in your judgment or mine. Neither Mr. Parker nor any other person ever had authority from me to say, that any man's political creed would be an insuperable bar to promotion. No such rule has ever been adopted. Political principles and discretion will always be considered, with all other qualifications, and well weighed, in all appointments. But no such monopolizing, and contracted, and illiberal system, as that alleged to have been expressed by Mr. Parker, was ever adopted by me.

Washington appointed a multitude of democrats and jacobins of the deepest die. I have been more cautious in this respect; but there is danger of proscribing, under imputations of democracy, some of the ablest, most influential, and best characters in the Union.

Inclosed is a letter from William Cobb, requesting to be collector at Portland. I send you these letters, that they may be filed in your office, with others relative to the same subject.

[1] Mr. Marshall had said of this letter, —

"If you conceive that no such letter should be sent, it may at once be suppressed. If you wish any changes in that now transmitted, I will, on receiving your wish, immediately obey it. If the letter, as sent, is satisfactory to you, I must ask the favor of you to let Mr. Shaw forward it to Mr. King."

TO S. DEXTER, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Quincy, 9 October, 1800.

DEAR SIR,— I have read the inclosed tedious proceedings, but cannot reconcile myself to the severity of the sentences. One of the officers certainly ought to be dismissed, and compelled to do justice to the men. But the circumstances of degradation and infamy might work upon the compassion of his neighbors powerfully enough to make him a great man in the militia or some State government. The other, perhaps, ought to be dismissed only, but of this I am not decided. Let them rest till I see you, which will not be long after, nor much before, Mrs. Dexter will make you healthy and happy.

I am, with great regard,

JOHN ADAMS.

O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Washington, 8 November, 1800.

SIR,— I have, after due reflection, considered it a duty which I owe to myself and family, to retire from the office of Secretary of the Treasury; and accordingly I take the liberty to request that the President would be pleased to accept my resignation, to take effect, if agreeable to him, only at the close of the present year.[1]

In thus suggesting my wishes, I am influenced by a desire of affording to the President suitable time to designate my successor, and also of reserving to myself an opportunity to

[1] Mr. Wolcott seems not to have been entirely easy in his mind touching his secret occupations during the preceding two months. His mode of compounding with his conscience is curiously set forth in his letter to Alexander Hamilton of the 3d of September. Gibbs's *Memoirs, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 416. See also the letter of the 3d October, given in Gibbs, with omissions which are nearly all supplied in *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 471. The idea of giving the President, whom he was doing his best to eject from office after the 3d of March, time to select a successor for two months, is only one degree less singular than that suggested by his biographer, that his decision was postponed until after he had become satisfied that the last hope of his continuance, through the secret movement for Mr. Pinckney, must fail. See Gibbs's *Memoirs, &c.*, vol. ii. pp. 443.

In the meantime, Mr. Adams had not the remotest suspicion of what was going on. Not altogether unfitly does Mr. Wolcott himself remark: "It appears to me that certain federalists are in danger of losing character in point of sincerity!" Gibbs, vol. ii. p. 431.

transfer the business of the department without injury to the public service.

I have the honor to be, &c.

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Washington, 10 November, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your letter of the 8th of this month, and am sorry to find that you judge it necessary to retire from office. Although I shall part with your services as Secretary of the Treasury with reluctance and regret, I am nevertheless sensible that you are the best and the only judge of the expediency of your resignation.

If you persist in your resolution, your own time shall be mine. I should wish to know whether, by the close of the present year, you mean the last of December, or the fourth of March. If the first, it is so near at hand that no time is to be lost in considering of a successor.

I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

JOHN JAY TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Private.)

Albany, 10 November, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Still pressed by public business, occasioned by the late session, I take up my pen to write you a few lines before the mail closes. It very unexpectedly happened that the anti-federal party succeeded in the last election at the city of New York, and acquired a decided majority in the *Assembly*. Well knowing their views and temper, it was not advisable that the speech should contain any matter respecting national officers or measures, which would afford them an opportunity of indulging their propensity to do injustice to both in their answer.

But the next morning after the delivery of the speech, and before they proceeded to the appointment of the electors, I sent them a message (and it is not usual to return any answers to such messages,) in which I expressed sentiments which leave

no room for your political enemies to draw improper inferences from the reserve observable in the speech. The respect due to myself, as well as to you, forbade me to remain silent on a subject and on an occasion so highly interesting; and I flatter myself it will be agreeable to you to perceive from these circumstances, and to be assured, that I still remain, and will remain, dear Sir, your sincere and faithful friend,

JOHN JAY.

Just on closing this letter, a newspaper, which I inclose, came in. It contains a copy of the Message.

O. WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, TO JOHN ADAMS.

Washington, 11 November, 1800.

SIR, — I have the honor to acknowledge with thanks the President's obliging letter of yesterday. The time contemplated by myself for retiring from office is the last day of December next. It will, however, be necessary for me to remain here several weeks after my resignation takes place, whenever that event may happen, for the purpose of completing the business which will have been by me previously commenced. Notwithstanding my resignation will take place, agreeable to the President's permission, on the last day of December, any services, which I can afterwards render, while here, will be at the disposal of my successor or the government.

I have the honor, &c.

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

TO JOHN JAY.

Washington, 24 November, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I received last week your friendly private letter of the 10th. The assurance of the continuance of your friendship was unnecessary for me, because I have never had a doubt of it. But others invent and report as they please. They have preserved hitherto, however, more delicacy towards the friendship between you and me than any other.

The last mission to France, and the consequent dismission of

the twelve regiments, although an essential branch of my system of policy, has been to those who have been intriguing and laboring for an army of fifty thousand men, an unpardonable fault. If by their folly they have thrown themselves on their backs, and jacobins should walk over their bellies, as military gentlemen express promotions over their heads, whom should they blame but themselves?

Among the very few truths, in a late pamphlet,[1] there is one which I shall ever acknowledge with pleasure, namely, that the principal merit of the negotiation for peace was Mr. Jay's. I wish you would permit our Historical Society to print the papers you drew up on that occasion. I often say, that, when my confidence in Mr. Jay shall cease, I must give up the cause of confidence, and renounce it with all men.

With great truth and regard, I am now, and ever shall be, your friend and servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN JAY.

Washington, 19 December, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Ellsworth, afflicted with the gravel and the gout, and intending to pass the winter in the south of France, after a few weeks in England, has resigned his office of Chief Justice, and I have nominated you to your old station. This is as independent of the inconstancy of the people, as it is of the will of a President. In the future administration of our country, the firmest security we can have against the effects of visionary schemes or fluctuating theories, will be in a solid judiciary; and nothing will cheer the hopes of the best men so much as your acceptance of this appointment. You have now a great opportunity to render a most signal service to your country. I therefore pray you most earnestly to consider of it seriously, and accept it. You may very properly resign the short remainder of your gubernatorial period, and Mr. Van Rensselaer may discharge the duties. I had no permission from you to take this step, but it appeared to me that Providence had thrown in my way an opportunity, not only of marking to the public the spot where, in my opinion, the greatest mass of

[1] Mr. Hamilton's attack upon him.

worth remained collected in one individual, but of furnishing my country with the best security its inhabitants afforded against the increasing dissolution of morals.

With unabated friendship, and the highest esteem and respect, I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. Your commission will soon follow this letter.[1]

TO GEORGE CHURCHMAN AND JACOB LINDLEY.

Washington, 24 January, 1801.

FRIENDS, — I have received your letter of the 17th of the first month, and thank you for communicating the letter to me of our friend Warner Mifflin. I have read both with pleasure, because I believe they proceeded from a sense of duty and a principle of benevolence.

Although I have never sought popularity by any animated speeches or inflammatory publications against the slavery of the blacks, my opinion against it has always been known, and my practice has been so conformable to my sentiments that I have always employed freemen, both as domestics and laborers, and never in my life did I own a slave. The abolition of slavery must be gradual, and accomplished with much caution and circumspection. Violent means and measures would produce greater violations of justice and humanity than the continuance of the practice. Neither Mr. Mifflin nor yourselves, I presume, would be willing to venture on exertions which would probably excite insurrections among the blacks to rise against their masters, and imbue their hands in innocent blood.

There are many other evils in our country which are growing (whereas the practice of slavery is fast diminishing), and threaten to bring punishment on our land more immediately than the oppression of the blacks. That sacred regard to truth in which

[1] "Governor Jay's determination to retire from public life had been formed with too much deliberation and sincerity to be shaken by the honor now tendered to him, and the appointment was promptly and unequivocally declined." Jay's *Life of J. Jay*, vol. i. p. 422.

Mr. Jay, in his answer, assigns the state of his health as the deciding reason, which removed every doubt from his mind.

you and I were educated, and which is certainly taught and enjoined from on high, seems to be vanishing from among us. A general relaxation of education and government, a general debauchery as well as dissipation, produced by pestilential philosophical principles of Epicurus, infinitely more than by shows and theatrical entertainments; these are, in my opinion, more serious and threatening evils than even the slavery of the blacks, hateful as that is. I might even add that I have been informed that the condition of the common sort of white people in some of the Southern States, particularly Virginia, is more oppressed, degraded, and miserable, than that of the negroes. These vices and these miseries deserve the serious and compassionate consideration of friends, as well as the slave trade and the degraded state of the blacks. I wish you success in your benevolent endeavors to relieve the distresses of our fellow creatures, and shall always be ready to coöperate with you as far as my means and opportunities can reasonably be expected to extend.

I am, with great respect and esteem, your friend,

JOHN ADAMS.

TO ELIAS BOUDINOT.

Washington, 26 January, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — I have, this morning, received your favor of the 20th. The anxiety of the gentlemen of the law in New Jersey to have the present President of the United States appointed Chief Justice, after the 3d of March, is very flattering to me.[1] Although neither pride, nor vanity, nor indolence, would prevent me from accepting any situation, in which I could be useful, I know of none for which I am fit. The office of Chief Justice is too important for any man to hold of sixty-five years of age, who has wholly neglected the study of the law for six and twenty

[1] This singular idea is suggested by Mr. Boudinot in the following manner; — "Being just returned from New Jersey, will you excuse the liberty I take in mentioning to you, that I found the gentlemen of the law there exceedingly anxious relative to a report that is prevailing, that the office of Chief Justice of the United States may possibly be filled by our present Chief Magistrate, after the month of March next. I am authorized to say, that it would give them the greatest pleasure, and raise their drooping confidence in the future government of the United States."

years. I have already, by the nomination of a gentleman in the full vigor of middle age, in the full habits of business, and whose reading in the science is fresh in his head, to this office, put it wholly out of my power, and, indeed, it never was in my hopes or wishes.

The remainder of my days will probably be spent in the labors of agriculture, and the amusements of literature, in both of which I have always taken more delight than in any public office, of whatever rank. Far removed from all intrigues, and out of the reach of all the great and little passions that agitate the world, although I take no resolutions, nor make any promises, I hope to enjoy more tranquillity than has ever before been my lot. Mrs. A. returns her thanks for the friendly politeness of Mrs. Boudinot and Mrs. Bradford. The other parts of your letter will be duly weighed and considered in their season.

TO RICHARD STOCKTON.

Washington, 27 January, 1801.

Dear Sir, — I am much obliged by your favor of the 17th. If the judiciary bill should pass, as I hope and believe it will, I should be very glad of your advice relative to appointments in other States as well as your own.

The talents and literary qualifications of Mr. William Griffith, of Burlington, have been familiar to me for some time. Your account of his character in other respects is very satisfactory. I doubt, however, of his being literally at the head of his profession at the bar, while Mr. Richard Stockton is there, and am not clear that his pretensions to the circuit bench are the first. I wish to know, in confidence, your sentiments. You may have reasons for resigning to another your own pretensions, but before any nomination is made, I should be very glad to know, whether you would accept it. It is very probable to me that your prospects in your own State and at large may be better for yourself, and more for the benefit of the public, but as I am not certainly informed, I shall be somewhat embarrassed. I may have been too indifferent to the smiles of some men, and to the

frowns of others,[1] but neither will influence my judgment, I hope, in determining nominations of judges, characters at all times sacred in my estimation.

With great esteem, I remain, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO J. MARSHALL, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Washington, 31 January, 1801.

I request you would cause to be prepared letters for me to sign, to the King of Prussia, recalling Mr. John Quincy Adams, as minister plenipotentiary from his court. You may express the thanks of the President to his Majesty for the obliging reception and kind treatment this minister has met with at his court, and may throw the letter into the form of leave to return to the United States. You will look into the forms, in your office, of former instances of recall. I wish you to make out one letter to go by the way of Hamburg, another by Holland, a third by France, a fourth through Mr. King in England, a fifth, if you please, by the way of Bremen or Stettin, or any other channel most likely to convey it soon. It is my opinion this minister ought to be recalled from Prussia. Justice would require that he should be sent to France or England, if he should be continued in Europe. The mission to St. James's is perfectly well filled by Mr. King; that to France is no doubt destined for some other character. Besides, it is my opinion that it is my duty to call him home.

TO S. DEXTER, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Washington, 31 January, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — I hereby authorize and request you to execute the office of Secretary of State so far as to affix the seal of the United States to the inclosed commission to the present Secre-

[1] This is an allusion to Mr. Stockton's letter, who said, speaking of "those who under one name or another have perpetually opposed this government and calumniated its administration;" —

"Your public conduct, Sir, has fully evinced that you never dreaded the frowns, nor courted the smiles of such men."

tary of State, John Marshall, of Virginia, to be Chief Justice of the United States, and to certify in your own name on the commission as executing the office of the Secretary of State *pro hâc vice.*

JOHN ADAMS.

JOHN MARSHALL TO JOHN ADAMS.

4 February, 1801.

SIR, — I pray you to accept my grateful acknowledgments for the honor conferred on me in appointing me Chief Justice of the United States. This additional and flattering mark of your good opinion has made an impression on my mind which time will not efface.

I shall enter immediately on the duties of the office, and hope never to give you occasion to regret having made this appointment.

With the most respectful attachment, &c.

J. MARSHALL.

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Washington, 4 February, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — I have this moment received your letter of this morning, and am happy in your acceptance of the office of Chief Justice. The circumstances of the times, however, render it necessary that I should request and authorize you, as I do by this letter, to continue to discharge all the duties of Secretary of State until ulterior arrangements can be made.

With great esteem, I am, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOSEPH WARD.

Washington, 4 February, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — I have received and read with much pleasure your kind and friendly letter of January 22d. As I have all my

lifetime expected such events as these which have lately occurred, I was not surprised when they happened. They ought to be lessons and solemn warnings to all thinking men. Clouds black and gloomy hang over this country, threatening a fierce tempest arising merely from party conflicts, at a time when the internal and external prosperity of it, and the national prospects in every other respect, are the most pleasing and promising that we ever beheld. I pray Heaven to dissipate the storm. Depressions of spirits, such as wound the nice organs of health, I have not perceived and do not apprehend, but I have some reason to expect that my constitution will have another trial when I come to exchange a routine of domestic life, without much exercise, for a life of long journeys and distant voyages, in one or other of which I have been monthly or at least yearly engaged for two and forty years. When such long continued and violent exercise, such frequent agitations of the body, are succeeded by stillness, it may shake an old frame. Rapid motion ought not to be succeeded by sudden rest. But, at any rate, I have not many years before me, and those few are not very enchanting in prospect. Till death, an honest man and candid friend will ever be dear to my heart, and Colonel Ward, as one of that character, may ever be sure of the good-will and kind remembrance of

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. Ward, I wish you would write a dissertation upon parties in this country.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Washington, 7 February, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — I lament with you the arbitrary application of party nicknames and unpopular appellations, and although with you I heartily wish, yet I cannot say I hope, that the wickedness of the wicked will come to an end. On the contrary, it appears to me that, unlike the rising light which shineth more and more to the perfect day, the darkness will thicken till it may be felt. In the multitude of applications for consulates, it is impossible for me to say what Mr. Lee's success may be.

The imputation of jacobinism, which I believe to be groundless, will have no weight with me. It may, however, with the Senate.

I have no inclination to inquire whether I should have been evaded, if the electors in South Carolina had been federal, or not. I can easily credit such a conjecture. Yet I believe the Pinckneys are honorable men, and would not have promoted or connived at the design. The original plan, which was determined in a caucus, proposed, I suppose, by Hamilton, and promoted by Goodhue and his patrons and puppets, was the fundamental error. Messrs. Pinckney had no just pretensions to such an elevation any more than Mr. Burr, except that their characters are fairer, more independent, and respectable.

I know no more danger of a political convulsion, if a President, *pro tempore*, of the Senate, or a Secretary of State, or Speaker of the House, should be made President by Congress, than if Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Burr is declared such. The President would be as legal in one case as in either of the others, in my opinion, and the people as well satisfied. This, however, must be followed by another election, and Mr. Jefferson would be chosen; I should, in that case, decline the election. We shall be tossed, at any rate, in the tempestuous sea of liberty for years to come, and where the bark can land but in a political convulsion, I cannot see. I wish the good ship to her desired harbor.

With usual esteem and regard, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Washington, 10 February, 1801.

DEAR SIR, — Inclosed is a Newburyport Herald, in which is quoted "a letter from John Adams, dated Amsterdam, 15th December, 1780, to Thomas Cushing, Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts." This letter has been, for some years past, reprinted and quoted in many American pamphlets and newspapers as genuine, and imposes on many people by supposing and imputing to me sentiments inconsistent with the whole tenor of my life and all the feelings of my nature.[1] I remember

[1] This letter has been, very lately, quoted as genuine.

to have read the letter in English newspapers soon after it was published, at a time when the same English papers teemed with forged letters, long, tedious, flat, and dull, in the name of Dr. Franklin, the most concise, sprightly, and entertaining writer of his time. The Doctor declared them all to be forgeries, which he was not under a necessity of doing, because every reader of common sense and taste knew them to be such from their style and nonsense. The letter in my name, I also declare to be a forgery. I never wrote a letter in the least degree resembling it to Lieutenant-Governor Cushing, nor to any other person. This declaration I pray you to file in your office, and you have my consent to publish it, if you think fit.

I am, Sir, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

OLIVER WOLCOTT TO JOHN ADAMS.

Middletown, 28 March, 1801.

I embrace the earliest opportunity which I have been able to improve, since your arrival at Quincy, to express my most sincere acknowledgments for the distinguished proof, which I have received, of your confidence, in being appointed a judge of the second circuit of the United States.

My friends have communicated to me the circumstances which attended the appointment; by which I hear, with the highest satisfaction, that I owe the honorable station in which I have been placed, to your favorable opinion, and in no degree to their solicitation. Believing that gratitude to benefactors is among the most amiable, and ought to be among the most indissoluble, of social obligations, I shall, without reserve, cherish the emotions which are inspired by a sense of duty and honor on this occasion.[1]

I am, &c.

OLIVER WOLCOTT.

[1] It is stated in Mr. Gibbs's work, that this "appointment had been made with a full knowledge of Mr. Wolcott's political views, which were, indeed, no secret to any one." Mr. Adams certainly had no suspicion of the spirit betrayed in the letter to Fisher Ames, of the 10th August, 1800. Mr. Wolcott shows conscientious struggles to obtain from his friends the right publicly to declare his opposition; but this they denied him, and therefore he never exercised it. Gibbs's *Memoirs*, &c., vol. ii. pp. 400, 431, 496.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT.

Quincy, 6 April, 1801.

Sir, — I have received your favor of the 28th of March, and I read it with much pleasure. The information you have received from your friends, concerning the circumstances of your nomination to be a judge of the second circuit of the United States, is very correct.

I have never allowed myself to speak much of the gratitude due from the public to individuals for past services, but I have always wished that more should be said of justice. Justice is due from the public to itself, and justice is also due to individuals. When the public discards or neglects talents and integrity, united with meritorious past services, it commits iniquity against itself, by depriving itself of the benefit of future services; and it does wrong to the individual, by depriving him of the reward, which long and faithful services have merited. Twenty years of able and faithful services on the part of Mr. Wolcott, remunerated only by a simple subsistence, it appeared to me, constituted a claim upon the public, which ought to be attended to. As it was of importance that no appointment should be made that would be refused, I took measures to ascertain from your friends the probability of your acceptance, and then made the nomination, happy to have so fair an opportunity to place you beyond the reach of will and pleasure. I wish you much pleasure, and more honor, in your law studies and pursuits, and I doubt not you will contribute your full share to make justice run down our streets as a stream. My family joins in friendly regards to you and yours. With much esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir,[1] &c.

John Adams.

[1] Mr. Adams was charged by his enemies, and among others by Mr. Wolcott, with being unreasonably jealous and suspicious. To the day of his death he never suspected that the individual to whom he addressed this letter, overflowing with kindness, was the person who had secretly furnished the confidential information, obtained as a cabinet officer and adviser of the President, upon which Mr. Hamilton rested his attack upon his reputation, and had revised, corrected, amended, and approved all of that paper, whilst in manuscript. The evidence of this has now been voluntarily placed before the public by his own grandson, and by the son of Mr. Hamilton. See his letter to Mr. Hamilton, 3d September, 1800, in Gibbs's *Memoirs of the Federal Adminis-*

trations, vol. ii. pp. 416–418, and that of 2d October, 1800, in *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 471–475. After a perusal of these letters, the conclusions lately drawn by a perfectly impartial witness, may be deemed not entirely unworthy of consideration. Referring to Mr. Gibbs's own statement, this writer says, —

"Even from this *ex parte* case, it is clear that the secretaries, during the whole period of their official service, were cognizant of a plot for the overthrow of their chief; that they not only did not disclose this, but did their best to promote it; and that they both directed the public counsels to its furtherance, and without stint disclosed the confidential proceedings of the President himself to supply it with fuel. A parallel to this, it is true, is found in the treatment of James II., by Churchill and Sunderland, and of Napoleon by Talleyrand and Fouché; but even to these extreme and revolutionary cases no term short of ill-faith can be applied. It is argued that the cabinet saw that the President's cause was inimical to good government, and that, therefore, they had a right to oppose him. Certainly they had, if they had first resigned, and then, when in opposition, respected the sanctity of official communications." Wharton's *State Trials*. Preliminary Notes, p. 13.

The reason given, why these officers did not resign, is that they were determined to remain, in order "to control the actions of the President." Gibbs's *Memoirs, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 214. It is worthy of remark, in this connection, that in all the subsequent vicissitudes of party conflict in the United States, no similar violation of confidence in cabinet officers has ever taken place.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

SPEECHES AND MESSAGES

TO CONGRESS,

PROCLAMATIONS,

AND

ADDRESSES.

SPEECHES TO CONGRESS.

INAUGURAL SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,

4 MARCH, 1797.

WHEN it was first perceived, in early times, that no middle course for America remained between unlimited submission to a foreign legislature and a total independence of its claims, men of reflection were less apprehensive of danger from the formidable power of fleets and armies they must determine to resist, than from those contests and dissensions, which would certainly arise, concerning the forms of government to be instituted, over the whole, and over the parts of this extensive country. Relying, however, on the purity of their intentions, the justice of their cause, and the integrity and intelligence of the people, under an overruling Providence, which had so signally protected this country from the first, the representatives of this nation, then consisting of little more than half its present numbers, not only broke to pieces the chains which were forging, and the rod of iron that was lifted up, but frankly cut asunder the ties which had bound them, and launched into an ocean of uncertainty.

The zeal and ardor of the people during the revolutionary war, supplying the place of government, commanded a degree of order, sufficient at least for the temporary preservation of society. The confederation, which was early felt to be necessary, was prepared from the models of the Batavian and Helvetic confederacies, the only examples which remain, with any detail and precision, in history, and certainly the only ones which the people at large had ever considered. But, reflecting on the striking difference in so many particulars between this country

and those where a courier may go from the seat of government to the frontier in a single day, it was then certainly foreseen by some, who assisted in Congress at the formation of it, that it could not be durable.

Negligence of its regulations, inattention to its recommendations, if not disobedience to its authority, not only in individuals but in States, soon appeared, with their melancholy consequences; universal languor, jealousies, rivalries of States; decline of navigation and commerce; discouragement of necessary manufactures; universal fall in the value of lands and their produce; contempt of public and private faith; loss of consideration and credit with foreign nations; and, at length, in discontents, animosities, combinations, partial conventions, and insurrection; threatening some great national calamity.)

In this dangerous crisis the people of America were not abandoned by their usual good sense, presence of mind, resolution, or integrity. Measures were pursued to concert a plan to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions, discussions, and deliberations, issued in the present happy constitution of government.

Employed in the service of my country abroad, during the whole course of these transactions, I first saw the Constitution of the United States in a foreign country. Irritated by no literary altercation, animated by no public debate, heated by no party animosity, I read it with great satisfaction, as a result of good heads, prompted by good hearts; as an experiment better adapted to the genius, character, situation, and relations of this nation and country, than any which had ever been proposed or suggested. In its general principles and great outlines, it was conformable to such a system of government as I had ever most esteemed, and in some States, my own native State in particular, had contributed to establish. Claiming a right of suffrage in common with my fellow-citizens, in the adoption or rejection of a constitution, which was to rule me and my posterity as well as them and theirs, I did not hesitate to express my approbation of it on all occasions, in public and in private. It was not then nor has been since any objection to it, in my mind, that the Executive and Senate were not more permanent. Nor

have I entertained a thought of promoting any alteration in it, but such as the people themselves, in the course of their experience, should see and feel to be necessary or expedient, and by their representatives in Congress and the State legislatures, according to the Constitution itself, adopt and ordain.

Returning to the bosom of my country, after a painful separation from it for ten years, I had the honor to be elected to a station under the new order of things, and I have repeatedly laid myself under the most serious obligations to support the Constitution. The operation of it has equalled the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and, from an habitual attention to it, satisfaction in its administration, and delight in its effect upon the peace, order, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, I have acquired an habitual attachment to it, and veneration for it.

What other form of government, indeed, can so well deserve our esteem and love?

There may be little solidity in an ancient idea, that congregations of men into cities and nations, are the most pleasing objects in the sight of superior intelligences; but this is very certain, that, to a benevolent human mind, there can be no spectacle presented by any nation, more pleasing, more noble, majestic, or august, than an assembly like that which has so often been seen in this and the other chamber of Congress; of a government, in which the executive authority, as well as that of all the branches of the legislature, are exercised by citizens selected at regular periods by their neighbors, to make and execute laws for the general good. Can any thing essential, any thing more than mere ornament and decoration, be added to this by robes or diamonds? Can authority be more amiable or respectable, when it descends from accidents or institutions established in remote antiquity, than when it springs fresh from the hearts and judgments of an honest and enlightened people? For it is the people only that are represented; it is their power and majesty that is reflected, and only for their good, in every legitimate government, under whatever form it may appear. The existence of such a government as ours, for any length of time, is a full proof of a general dissemination of knowledge and virtue throughout the whole body of the people. And what object of consideration, more pleasing than this, can be presented

to the human mind? If national pride is ever justifiable or excusable, it is when it springs, not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information, and benevolence.

In the midst of these pleasing ideas, we should be unfaithful to ourselves, if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties, if any thing partial or extraneous should infect the purity of our free, fair, virtuous, and independent elections. If an election is to be determined by a majority of a single vote, and that can be procured by a party, through artifice or corruption, the government may be the choice of a party, for its own ends, not of the nation, for the national good. If that solitary suffrage can be obtained by foreign nations, by flattery or menaces; by fraud or violence; by terror, intrigue, or venality; the government may not be the choice of the American people, but of foreign nations. It may be foreign nations who govern us, and not we, the people, who govern ourselves. And candid men will acknowledge, that, in such cases, choice would have little advantage to boast of over lot or chance.

Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed), which the people of America have exhibited, to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations, for eight years; under the administration of a citizen, who, by a long course of great actions regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, conducting a people, inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity, has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

In that retirement which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services, the gratitude of mankind, the happy fruits of them to himself and the world, which are daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of his country, which is opening from year to year! His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives, a bulwark against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace.

This example has been recommended to the imitation of his

successors, by both Houses of Congress, and by the voice of the legislatures and the people throughout the nation.

On this subject it might become me better to be silent, or to speak with diffidence; but, as something may be expected, the occasion, I hope, will be admitted as an apology, if I venture to say, that, if a preference upon principle of a free republican government, formed upon long and serious reflection, after a diligent and impartial inquiry after truth; if an attachment to the Constitution of the United States, and a conscientious determination to support it, until it shall be altered by the judgments and the wishes of the people, expressed in the mode prescribed in it; if a respectful attention to the constitutions of the individual States, and a constant caution and delicacy towards the State governments; if an equal and impartial regard to the rights, interests, honor, and happiness of all the States in the Union, without preference or regard to a northern or southern, eastern or western position, their various political opinions on essential points, or their personal attachments; if a love of virtuous men of all parties and denominations; if a love of science and letters, and a wish to patronize every rational effort to encourage schools, colleges, universities, academies, and every institution for propagating knowledge, virtue, and religion among all classes of the people, not only for their benign influence on the happiness of life in all its stages and classes and of society in all its forms, but as the only means of preserving our constitution from its natural enemies, the spirit of sophistry, the spirit of party, the spirit of intrigue, profligacy, and corruption, and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of destruction to elective governments; if a love of equal laws, of justice and humanity, in the interior administration; if an inclination to improve agriculture, commerce, and manufactures for necessity, convenience, and defence; if a spirit of equity and humanity towards the aboriginal nations of America, and a disposition to meliorate their condition by inclining them to be more friendly to us, and our citizens to be more friendly to them; if an inflexible determination to maintain peace and inviolable faith with all nations, and that system of neutrality and impartiality among the belligerent powers of Europe, which has been adopted by the government, and so solemnly sanctioned by both Houses of Congress, and applauded by the

legislatures of the States and the public opinion, until it shall be otherwise ordained by Congress; if a personal esteem for the French nation, formed in a residence of seven years chiefly among them, and a sincere desire to preserve the friendship which has been so much for the honor and interest of both nations; if, while the conscious honor and integrity of the people of America, and the internal sentiment of their own power and energies must be preserved, an earnest endeavor to investigate every just cause, and remove every colorable pretence of complaint; if an intention to pursue, by amicable negotiation, a reparation for the injuries that have been committed on the commerce of our fellow-citizens by whatever nation, and (if success cannot be obtained) to lay the facts before the legislature, that they may consider what further measures the honor and interest of the government and its constituents demand; if a resolution to do justice, as far as may depend upon me, at all times, and to all nations, and maintain peace, friendship, and benevolence with all the world; if an unshaken confidence in the honor, spirit, and resources of the American people, on which I have so often hazarded my all, and never been deceived; if elevated ideas of the high destinies of this country, and of my own duties towards it, founded on a knowledge of the moral principles and intellectual improvements of the people, deeply engraven on my mind in early life, and not obscured, but exalted by experience and age; and with humble reverence I feel it my duty to add, if a veneration for the religion of a people, who profess and call themselves Christians, and a fixed resolution to consider a decent respect for Christianity among the best recommendations for the public service; — can enable me in any degree to comply with your wishes, it shall be my strenuous endeavor that this sagacious injunction of the two Houses shall not be without effect.

With this great example before me, with the sense and spirit, the faith and honor, the duty and interest of the same American people, pledged to support the Constitution of the United States, I entertain no doubt of its continuance in all its energy; and my mind is prepared without hesitation, to lay myself under the most solemn obligations to support it to the utmost of my power.

And may that Being, who is supreme over all, the patron of order, the fountain of justice, and the protector, in all ages of the world, of virtuous liberty, continue his blessing upon this nation and its government, and give it all possible success and duration, consistent with the ends of his providence!

JOHN ADAMS.

SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,

16 MAY, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The personal inconveniences to the members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, in leaving their families and private affairs at this season of the year, are so obvious, that I the more regret the extraordinary occasion which has rendered the convention of Congress indispensable.

It would have afforded me the highest satisfaction to have been able to congratulate you on a restoration of peace to the nations of Europe, whose animosities have endangered our tranquillity; but we have still abundant cause of gratitude to the Supreme Dispenser of national blessings for general health and promising seasons; for domestic and social happiness; for the rapid progress and ample acquisitions of industry through extensive territories; for civil, political, and religious liberty. While other States are desolated with foreign war or convulsed with intestine divisions, the United States present the pleasing prospect of a nation governed by mild and equal laws, generally satisfied with the possession of their rights; neither envying the advantages nor fearing the power of other nations; solicitous only for the maintenance of order and justice and the preservation of liberty, increasing daily in their attachment to a system of government, in proportion to their experience of its utility; yielding a ready and general obedience to laws flowing from the reason, and resting on the only solid foundation, the affections of the people.

It is with extreme regret that I shall be obliged to turn your thoughts to other circumstances, which admonish us that some of these felicities may not be lasting; but if the tide of our

prosperity is full, and a reflux commencing, a vigilant circumspection becomes us, that we may meet our reverses with fortitude, and extricate ourselves from their consequences with all the skill we possess, and all the efforts in our power.

In giving to Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommending to their consideration such measures as appear to me to be necessary or expedient, according to my constitutional duty, the causes and the objects of the present extraordinary session will be explained.

After the President of the United States received information that the French government had expressed serious discontents at some proceedings of the government of these States, said to affect the interests of France, he thought it expedient to send to that country a new minister, fully instructed to enter on such amicable discussions, and to give such candid explanations, as might happily remove the discontents and suspicions of the French government, and vindicate the conduct of the United States. For this purpose he selected from among his fellow-citizens a character, whose integrity, talents, experience, and services, had placed him in the rank of the most esteemed and respected in the nation. The direct object of his mission was expressed in his letter of credence to the French republic; being "to maintain that good understanding, which, from the commencement of the alliance, had subsisted between the two nations; and to efface unfavorable impressions, banish suspicions, and restore that cordiality which was at once the evidence and the pledge of a friendly union;" and his instructions were to the same effect, "faithfully to represent the disposition of the government and the people of the United States (their disposition being one) to remove jealousies, and obviate complaints, by showing that they were groundless; to restore that mutual confidence which had been so unfortunately and injuriously impaired; and to explain the relative interests of both countries, and the real sentiments of his own."

A minister thus specially commissioned, it was expected, would have proved the instrument of restoring mutual confidence between the two republics. The first step of the French government corresponded with that expectation.

A few days before his arrival at Paris, the French minister of foreign relations informed the American minister then resi-

dent at Paris, of the formalities to be observed by himself in taking leave, and by his successor preparatory to his reception. These formalities they observed, and, on the 9th of December, presented officially to the minister of foreign relations, the one, a copy of his letters of recall, the other, a copy of his letters of credence. These were laid before the executive directory. Two days afterwards, the minister of foreign relations informed the recalled American minister, that the executive directory had determined not to receive another minister plenipotentiary from the United States until after the redress of grievances demanded of the American government, and which the French republic had a right to expect from it. The American minister immediately endeavored to ascertain whether, by refusing to receive him, it was intended that he should retire from the territories of the French republic; and verbal answers were given that such was the intention of the directory. For his own justification he desired a written answer, but obtained none until towards the last of January, when, receiving notice, in writing, to quit the territories of the republic, he proceeded to Amsterdam, where he proposed to wait for instructions from his government. During his residence at Paris, cards of hospitality were refused him, and he was threatened with being subjected to the jurisdiction of the minister of police; but with becoming firmness he insisted on the protection of the law of nations, due to him as the known minister of a foreign power. You will derive further information from his despatches, which will be laid before you.

As it is often necessary that nations should treat for the mutual advantage of their affairs, and especially to accommodate and terminate differences, and as they can treat only by ministers, the right of embassy is well known and established by the law and usage of nations The refusal on the part of France to receive our minister, is then the denial of a right; but the refusal to receive him until we have acceded to their demands without discussion and without investigation, is to treat us neither as allies, nor as friends, nor as a sovereign State.

With this conduct of the French government, it will be proper to take into view the public audience given to the late minister of the United States on his taking leave of the executive direct-

ory. The speech of the President discloses sentiments more alarming than the refusal of a minister, because more dangerous to our independence and union, and at the same time studiously marked with indignities towards the government of the United States. It evinces a disposition to separate the people of the United States from the government; to persuade them that they have different affections, principles, and interests, from those of their fellow-citizens, whom they themselves have chosen to manage their common concerns; and thus to produce divisions fatal to our peace. Such attempts ought to be repelled with a decision which shall convince France and the world that we are not a degraded people, humiliated under a colonial spirit of fear and sense of inferiority, fitted to be the miserable instruments of foreign influence, and regardless of national honor, character, and interest.

I should have been happy to have thrown a veil over these transactions, if it had been possible to conceal them; but they have passed on the great theatre of the world, in the face of all Europe and America, and with such circumstances of publicity and solemnity that they cannot be disguised, and will not soon be forgotten. They have inflicted a wound in the American breast. It is my sincere desire, however, that it may be healed. It is my desire, and in this I presume I concur with you and with our constituents, to preserve peace and friendship with all nations; and believing that neither the honor nor the interest of the United States absolutely forbids the repetition of advances for securing these desirable objects with France, I shall institute a fresh attempt at negotiation, and shall not fail to promote and accelerate an accommodation on terms compatible with the rights, duties, interests, and honor of the nation. If we have committed errors, and these can be demonstrated, we shall be willing to correct them. If we have done injuries, we shall be willing, on conviction, to redress them; and equal measures of justice we have a right to expect from France and every other nation.

The diplomatic intercourse between the United States and France being at present suspended, the government has no means of obtaining official information from that country; nevertheless there is reason to believe that the executive directory passed a decree, on the 2d of March last, contravening, in

part, the treaty of amity and commerce of one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight, injurious to our lawful commerce, and endangering the lives of our citizens. A copy of this decree will be laid before you.

While we are endeavoring to adjust all our differences with France by amicable negotiation, the progress of the war in Europe, the depredations on our commerce, the personal injuries to our citizens, and the general complexion of affairs, render it my indispensable duty to recommend to your consideration effectual measures of defence.

The commerce of the United States has become an interesting object of attention, whether we consider it in relation to the wealth and finances, or the strength and resources of the nation. With a sea-coast of near two thousand miles in extent, opening a wide field for fisheries, navigation, and commerce, a great portion of our citizens naturally apply their industry and enterprise to these objects. Any serious and permanent injury to commerce would not fail to produce the most embarrassing disorders. To prevent it from being undermined and destroyed, it is essential that it receive an adequate protection.

The naval establishment must occur to every man who considers the injuries committed on our commerce, the insults offered to our citizens, and the description of the vessels by which these abuses have been practised. As the sufferings of our mercantile and seafaring citizens cannot be ascribed to the omission of duties demandable, considering the neutral situation of our country, they are to be attributed to the hope of impunity, arising from a supposed inability on our part to afford protection. To resist the consequences of such impressions on the minds of foreign nations, and to guard against the degradation and servility which they must finally stamp on the American character, is an important duty of government.

A naval power, next to the militia, is the natural defence of the United States. The experience of the last war would be sufficient to show, that a moderate naval force, such as would be easily within the present abilities of the Union, would have been sufficient to have baffled many formidable transportations of troops from one State to another, which were then practised. Our sea-coasts, from their great extent, are more easily annoyed, and more easily defended, by a naval force, than any other.

With all the materials our country abounds; in skill our naval architects and navigators are equal to any; and commanders and seamen will not be wanting.

But although the establishment of a permanent system of naval defence appears to be requisite, I am sensible it cannot be formed so speedily and extensively as the present crisis demands. Hitherto I have thought proper to prevent the sailing of armed vessels, except on voyages to the East Indies, where general usage and the danger from pirates appeared to render the permission proper; yet the restriction has originated solely from a wish to prevent collusions with the powers at war, contravening the act of Congress, of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four; and not from any doubt entertained by me of the policy and propriety of permitting our vessels to employ means of defence, while engaged in a lawful foreign commerce. It remains for Congress to prescribe such regulations as will enable our seafaring citizens to defend themselves against violations of the law of nations; and at the same time restrain them from committing acts of hostility against the powers at war. In addition to this voluntary provision for defence, by individual citizens, it appears to me necessary to equip the frigates, and provide other vessels of inferior force to take under convoy such merchant vessels as shall remain unarmed.

The greater part of the cruisers, whose depredations have been most injurious, have been built, and some of them partially equipped, in the United States. Although an effectual remedy may be attended with difficulty, yet I have thought it my duty to present the subject generally to your consideration. If a mode can be devised by the wisdom of Congress to prevent the resources of the United States from being converted into the means of annoying our trade, a great evil will be prevented. With the same view I think it proper to mention that some of our citizens, resident abroad, have fitted out privateers, and others have voluntarily taken the command, or entered on board of them, and committed spoliations on the commerce of the United States. Such unnatural and iniquitous practices can be restrained only by severe punishments.

But besides a protection of our commerce on the seas, I think it highly necessary to protect it at home, where it is collected

in our most important ports. The distance of the United States from Europe, and the well known promptitude, ardor, and courage of the people in defence of their country, happily diminish the probability of invasion. Nevertheless, to guard against sudden and predatory incursions, the situation of some of our principal seaports demands your consideration; and as our country is vulnerable in other interests besides those of its commerce, you will seriously deliberate whether the means of general defence ought not to be increased by an addition to the regular artillery and cavalry, and by arrangements for forming a provisional army.

With the same view, and as a measure which, even in a time of universal peace, ought not to be neglected, I recommend to your consideration a revision of the laws for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, to render that natural and safe defence of the country efficacious.

Although it is very true that we ought not to involve ourselves in the political system of Europe, but to keep ourselves always distinct and separate from it, if we can, yet, to effect this separation, early, punctual, and continual information of the current chain of events, and of the political projects in contemplation, is no less necessary than if we were directly concerned in them. It is necessary, in order to the discovery of the efforts made to draw us into the vortex, in season to make preparations against them. However we may consider ourselves, the maritime and commercial powers of the world will consider the United States of America as forming a weight in that balance of power in Europe, which never can be forgotten or neglected. It would not only be against our interest, but it would be doing wrong to one half of Europe at least, if we should voluntarily throw ourselves into either scale. It is a natural policy for a nation that studies to be neutral, to consult with other nations engaged in the same studies and pursuits; at the same time that measures ought to be pursued with this view, our treaties with Prussia and Sweden, one of which is expired, and the other near expiring, might be renewed.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

It is particularly your province to consider the state of the public finances, and to adopt such measures, respecting them,

as exigencies shall be found to require. The preservation of public credit, the regular extinguishment of the public debt, and a provision of funds to defray any extraordinary expenses, will of course call for your serious attention. Although the imposition of new burdens cannot be in itself agreeable, yet there is no ground to doubt that the American people will expect from you such measures, as their actual engagements, their present security, and future interests demand.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The present situation, of our country imposes an obligation on all the departments of government to adopt an explicit and decided conduct. In my situation, an exposition of the principles by which my administration will be governed, ought not to be omitted.

It is impossible to conceal from ourselves or the world, what has been before observed, that endeavors have been employed to foster and establish a division between the government and people of the United States. To investigate the causes which have encouraged this attempt, is not necessary; but to repel, by decided and united counsels, insinuations so derogatory to the honor, and aggressions so dangerous to the constitution, union, and even independence of the nation, is an indispensable duty.

It must not be permitted to be doubted, whether the people of the United States will support the government established by their voluntary consent, and appointed by their free choice; or whether, by surrendering themselves to the direction of foreign and domestic factions, in opposition to their own government, they will forfeit the honorable station they have hitherto maintained.

For myself, having never been indifferent to what concerned the interests of my country, devoted the best part of my life to obtain and support its independence, and constantly witnessed the patriotism, fidelity, and perseverance of my fellow-citizens, on the most trying occasions, it is not for me to hesitate or abandon a cause in which my heart has been so long engaged.

Convinced that the conduct of the government has been just and impartial to foreign nations, that those internal regulations

which have been established by law for the preservation of peace, are in their nature proper, and that they have been fairly executed, nothing will ever be done by me to impair the national engagements, to innovate upon principles which have been so deliberately and uprightly established, or to surrender in any manner the rights of the government. To enable me to maintain this declaration, I rely, under God, with entire confidence, on the firm and enlightened support of the national legislature, and upon the virtue and patriotism of my fellow-citizens.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

MR. VICE-PRESIDENT,
AND GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

It would be an affectation in me to dissemble the pleasure I feel on receiving this kind address.

My long experience of the wisdom, fortitude, and patriotism of the Senate of the United States enhances in my estimation the value of those obliging expressions of your approbation of my conduct, which are a generous reward for the past, and an affecting encouragement to constancy and perseverance in future.

Our sentiments appear to be so entirely in unison, that I cannot but believe them to be the rational result of the understandings and the natural feelings of the hearts of Americans in general, on contemplating the present state of the nation.

While such principles and affections prevail, they will form an indissoluble bond of union, and a sure pledge that our country has no essential injury to apprehend from any portentous appearances abroad. In a humble reliance on Divine Providence,

[1] There is abundant evidence remaining of the extreme care with which this speech was elaborated by the President. Not content with his own draught, he seems to have freely resorted to those furnished by Mr. Pickering and Mr. Wolcott, at the same time eliminating words, sentences, and paragraphs at every step. To Mr. Pickering he is unquestionably much indebted for portions of this dignified paper; at the same time, it should be noted that he took from it almost entire the only passage about the propriety of which there has been any question, that alluding to the address of the French directory to Mr. Monroe. See Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. i. p. 257.

In a paper previously submitted by Mr. Pickering, suggesting topics for the message, is a recommendation of an alien law. No notice of it seems to have been taken in forming the message.

we may rest assured that, while we reiterate with sincerity our endeavors to accommodate all our differences with France, the independence of our country cannot be diminished, its dignity degraded, or its glory tarnished, by any nation or combination of nations, whether friends or enemies.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MR. SPEAKER,
AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I receive with great satisfaction your candid approbation of the convention of Congress, and thank you for your assurances that the interesting subjects recommended to your consideration shall receive the attention, which their importance demands, and your coöperation may be expected in those measures which may appear necessary for our security or peace.

The declarations of the representatives of this nation, of their satisfaction at my promotion to the first office in the government, and of their confidence in my sincere endeavors to discharge the various duties of it with advantage to our common country, have excited my most grateful sensibility.

I pray you, gentlemen, to believe, and to communicate such assurance to our constituents, that no event, which I can foresee to be attainable by any exertions in the discharge of my duties, can afford me so much cordial satisfaction as to conduct a negotiation with the French republic, to a removal of prejudices, a correction of errors, a dissipation of umbrages, an accommodation of all differences, and a restoration of harmony and affection, to the mutual satisfaction of both nations. And whenever the legitimate organs of intercourse shall be restored, and the real sentiments of the two governments can be candidly communicated to each other, although strongly impressed with the necessity of collecting ourselves into a manly posture of defence, I nevertheless entertain an encouraging confidence, that a mutual spirit of conciliation, a disposition to compensate injuries, and accommodate each other in all our relations and connections, will produce an agreement to a treaty, consistent with the engagements, rights, duties, and honor of both nations.

JOHN ADAMS.

SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,

23 NOVEMBER, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,
AND OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I was for some time apprehensive that it would be necessary, on account of the contagious sickness which afflicted the city of Philadelphia, to convene the national legislature at some other place. This measure it was desirable to avoid, because it would occasion much public inconvenience, and a considerable public expense, and add to the calamities of the inhabitants of this city, whose sufferings must have excited the sympathy of all their fellow-citizens. Therefore, after taking measures to ascertain the state and decline of the sickness, I postponed my determination, having hopes, now happily realized, that, without hazard to the lives or health of the members, Congress might assemble at this place, where it was next by law to meet. I submit, however, to your consideration, whether a power to postpone the meeting of Congress, without passing the time fixed by the Constitution upon such occasions, would not be a useful amendment to the law of 1794.

Although I cannot yet congratulate you on the reëstablishment of peace in Europe, and the restoration of security to the persons and properties of our citizens from injustice and violence at sea, we have nevertheless abundant cause of gratitude to the source of benevolence and influence, for interior tranquillity and personal security, for propitious seasons, prosperous agriculture, productive fisheries, and general improvements; and, above all, for a rational spirit of civil and religious liberty, and a calm but steady determination to support our sovereignty, as well as our moral and religious principles, against all open and secret attacks.

Our envoys extraordinary to the French republic embarked, one in July, the other early in August, to join their colleague in Holland. I have received intelligence of the arrival of both of them in Holland, from whence they all proceeded on their journey to Paris, within a few days of the 19th of September. Whatever may be the result of this mission, I trust that nothing will have been omitted on my part to conduct the negotiation

to a successful conclusion, on such equitable terms as may be compatible with the safety, honor, and interests of the United States. Nothing, in the mean time, will contribute so much to the preservation of peace, and the attainment of justice, as a manifestation of that energy and unanimity, of which, on many former occasions, the people of the United States have given such memorable proofs, and the exertion of those resources for national defence, which a beneficent Providence has kindly placed within their power.

It may be confidently asserted, that nothing has occurred since the adjournment of Congress, which renders inexpedient those precautionary measures recommended by me to the consideration of the two houses, at the opening of your late extraordinary session. If that system was then prudent, it is more so now, as increasing depredations strengthen the reasons for its adoption.

Indeed, whatever may be the issue of the negotiation with France, and whether the war in Europe is or is not to continue, I hold it most certain that perfect tranquillity and order will not soon be obtained. The state of society has so long been disturbed, the sense of moral and religious obligations so much weakened, public faith and national honor have been so impaired, respect to treaties has been so diminished, and the law of nations has lost so much of its force, while pride, ambition, avarice, and violence, have been so long unrestrained, there remains no reasonable ground on which to raise an expectation, that a commerce, without protection or defence, will not be plundered.

The commerce of the United States is essential, if not to their existence, at least to their comfort, their growth, prosperity, and happiness. The genius, character, and habits of the people are highly commercial. Their cities have been formed and exist upon commerce. Our agriculture, fisheries, arts, and manufactures are connected with and depend upon it. In short, commerce has made this country what it is; and it cannot be destroyed or neglected without involving the people in poverty and distress. Great numbers are directly and solely supported by navigation. The faith of society is pledged for the preservation of the rights of commercial and seafaring, no less than of the other citizens. Under this view of our affairs,

I should hold myself guilty of a neglect of duty, if I forbore to recommend that we should make every exertion to protect our commerce, and to place our country in a suitable posture of defence, as the only sure means of preserving both.

I have entertained an expectation that it would have been in my power, at the opening of this session, to have communicated to you the agreeable information of the due execution of our treaty with his Catholic Majesty, respecting the withdrawing of his troops from our territory, and the demarkation of the line of limits; but by the latest authentic intelligence, Spanish garrisons were still continued within our country, and the running of the boundary line had not been commenced. These circumstances are the more to be regretted, as they cannot fail to affect the Indians in a manner injurious to the United States. Still, however, indulging the hope that the answers which have been given will remove the objections offered by the Spanish officers to the immediate execution of the treaty, I have judged it proper that we should continue in readiness to receive the posts, and to run the line of limits. Further information on this subject will be communicated in the course of the session.

In connection with this unpleasant state of things on our western frontier, it is proper for me to mention the attempts of foreign agents, to alienate the affections of the Indian nations, and to excite them to actual hostilities against the United States. Great activity has been exerted by these persons, who have insinuated themselves among the Indian tribes residing within the territory of the United States, to influence them to transfer their affections and force to a foreign nation, to form them into a confederacy, and prepare them for war against the United States.

Although measures have been taken to counteract these infractions of our rights, to prevent Indian hostilities, and to preserve entire their attachment to the United States, it is my duty to observe that, to give a better effect to these measures, and to obviate the consequences of a repetition of such practices, a law providing adequate punishment for such offences may be necessary.

The commissioners appointed under the fifth article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, between the United

States and Great Britain, to ascertain the river which was truly intended under the name of the river St. Croix mentioned in the treaty of peace, met at Passamaquoddy Bay in October, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, and viewed the mouths of the rivers in question, and the adjacent shores and islands; and being of opinion that actual surveys of both rivers to their sources were necessary, gave to the agents of the two nations instructions for that purpose, and adjourned to meet at Boston in August. They met; but the surveys requiring more time than had been supposed, and not being then completed, the commissioners again adjourned to meet at Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, in June next, when we may expect a final examination and decision.

The commissioners appointed in pursuance of the sixth article of the treaty, met at Philadelphia in May last to examine the claims of British subjects for debts contracted before the peace, and still remaining due to them from citizens or inhabitants of the United States. Various causes have hitherto prevented any determinations; but the business is now resumed, and doubtless will be prosecuted without interruption.

Several decisions on the claims of citizens of the United States, for losses and damages sustained by reason of irregular and illegal captures or condemnations of their vessels or other property, have been made by the commissioners in London, conformable to the seventh article of the treaty. The sums awarded by the commissioners have been paid by the British government. A considerable number of other claims, where costs and damages, and not captured property, were the only objects in question, have been decided by arbitration, and the sums awarded to the citizens of the United States have also been paid.

The commissioners appointed agreeably to the twenty-first article of our treaty with Spain, met at Philadelphia in the summer past, to examine and decide on the claims of our citizens for losses they have sustained in consequence of their vessels and cargoes having been taken by the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, during the late war between Spain and France. Their sittings have been interrupted, but are now resumed.

The United States being obligated to make compensation

for the losses and damages sustained by British subjects, upon the award of the commissioners acting under the sixth article of the treaty with Great Britain, and for the losses and damages sustained by British subjects, by reason of the capture of their vessels and merchandise, taken within the limits and jurisdiction of the United States, and brought into their ports, or taken by vessels originally armed in ports of the United States, upon the awards of the commissioners acting under the seventh article of the same treaty, it is necessary that provision be made for fulfilling these obligations.

The numerous captures of American vessels by the cruisers of the French republic, and of some by those of Spain, have occasioned considerable expenses in making and supporting the claims of our citizens before their tribunals. The sums required for this purpose have, in divers instances, been disbursed by the consuls of the United States. By means of the same captures, great numbers of our seamen have been thrown ashore in foreign countries, destitute of all means of subsistence; and the sick, in particular, have been exposed to grievous sufferings. The consuls have in these cases also advanced moneys for their relief. For these advances they reasonably expect reimbursements from the United States.

The consular act, relative to seamen, requires revision and amendment. The provisions for their support in foreign countries, and for their return, are found to be inadequate and ineffectual. Another provision seems necessary to be added to the consular act. Some foreign vessels have been discovered sailing under the flag of the United States, and with forged papers. It seldom happens that the consuls can detect this deception, because they have no authority to demand an inspection of the registers and sea letters.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

It is my duty to recommend to your serious consideration those objects which, by the Constitution, are placed particularly within your sphere, — the national debt and taxes.

Since the decay of the feudal system, by which the public defence was provided for chiefly at the expense of individuals, the system of loans has been introduced. And as no nation can raise within the year, by taxes, sufficient sums for its

defence and military operations in time of war, the sums loaned, and debts contracted, have necessarily become the subject of what have been called funding systems. The consequences arising from the continual accumulation of public debts in other countries ought to admonish us to be careful to prevent their growth in our own. The national defence must be provided for, as well as the support of government; but both should be accomplished as much as possible by immediate taxes, and as little as possible by loans. The estimates for the service of the ensuing year will, by my direction, be laid before you.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,
AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

We are met together at a most interesting period. The situations of the principal powers of Europe are singular and portentous. Connected with some by treaties, and with all by commerce, no important event there can be indifferent to us. Such circumstances call with peculiar importunity not less for a disposition to unite in all those measures on which the honor, safety, and prosperity of our country depend, than for all the exertions of wisdom and firmness.

In all such measures you may rely on my zealous and hearty concurrence.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I thank you for this address. When, after the most laborious investigation and serious reflection, without partial considerations or personal motives, measures have been adopted or recommended, I can receive no higher testimony of their rectitude than the approbation of an assembly so independent, patriotic, and enlightened, as the Senate of the United States.

[1] This speech seems to have been drawn up almost exclusively from Mr. Pickering's draught. Much, however, and particularly a long passage touching the right of expatriation and the naturalization of foreigners, was expunged.

Nothing has afforded me more entire satisfaction than the coincidence of your judgment with mine, in the opinion of the essential importance of our commerce, and the absolute necessity of a maritime defence. What is it that has drawn to Europe the superfluous riches of the three other quarters of the globe, but a marine? What is it that has drained the wealth of Europe itself into the coffers of two or three of its principal commercial powers, but a marine?

The world has furnished no example of a flourishing commerce, without a maritime protection; and a moderate knowledge of man and his history will convince any one that no such prodigy ever can arise. A mercantile marine and a military marine must grow up together; one cannot long exist without the other.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I receive this address from the House of Representatives of the United States with peculiar pleasure.

Your approbation of the meeting of Congress in this city, and of those other measures of the executive authority of government communicated in my address to both Houses at the opening of the session, afford me great satisfaction, as the strongest desire of my heart is to give satisfaction to the people and their representatives by a faithful discharge of my duty.

The confidence you express in the sincerity of my endeavors, and in the unanimity of the people, does me much honor and gives me great joy.

I rejoice in that harmony which appears in the sentiments of all the branches of the government, on the importance of our commerce, and our obligations to defend it, as well as on all the other subjects recommended to your consideration; and sincerely congratulate you and our fellow-citizens at large on this appearance, so auspicious to the honor, interest, and happiness of the nation.

JOHN ADAMS.

SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,[1]

8 DECEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

While, with reverence and resignation, we contemplate the dispensations of Divine Providence, in the alarming and destructive pestilence with which several of our cities and towns have been visited, there is cause for gratitude and mutual congratulations that the malady has disappeared, and that we are again permitted to assemble in safety at the seat of government, for the discharge of our important duties. But when we reflect that this fatal disorder has within a few years made repeated ravages in some of our principal seaports, and with increased malignancy, and when we consider the magnitude of the evils arising from the interruption of public and private business, whereby the national interests are deeply affected, I think it my duty to invite the legislature of the Union to examine the expediency of establishing suitable regulations in aid of the health laws of the respective States; for these being formed on the idea that contagious sickness may be communicated through the channels of commerce, there seems to be a necessity that Congress, who alone can regulate trade, should frame a system, which, while it may tend to preserve the general health, may be compatible with the interests of commerce and the safety of the revenue.

While we think on this calamity, and sympathize with the immediate sufferers, we have abundant reason to present to the Supreme Being our annual oblations of gratitude for a liberal participation in the ordinary blessings of his providence. To

[1] This speech was originally published with the following preface;—

"At twelve o'clock, Lieutenant-General Washington, with his Secretary, Colonel Lear, Major-Generals Pinckney and Hamilton, entered the hall, and took their places on the right of the Speaker's chair. The British and Portuguese ministers, and the British and Danish consuls, with their secretaries, had their places assigned them on the left of the chair.

"A few minutes after twelve, the President of the United States, accompanied by his secretary, and the heads of the several departments of the government, appeared. The President having taken his seat, and the officers of government theirs, near the general officers, he rose, and addressed the two Houses as follows."

the usual subjects of gratitude, I cannot omit to add one, of the first importance to our well-being and safety — I mean that spirit which has arisen in our country against the menaces and aggressions of a foreign nation. A manly sense of national honor, dignity, and independence, has appeared, which, if encouraged and invigorated by every branch of the government, will enable us to view undismayed the enterprises of any foreign power, and become the sure foundation of national prosperity and glory.

The course of the transactions in relation to the United States and France, which have come to my knowledge during your recess, will be made the subject of a future communication. That communication will confirm the ultimate failure of the measures which have been taken by the government of the United States, towards an amicable adjustment of differences with that power. You will at the same time perceive that the French government appears solicitous to impress the opinion, that it is averse to a rupture with this country, and that it has in a qualified manner declared itself willing to receive a minister from the United States for the purpose of restoring a good understanding. It is unfortunate for professions of this kind, that they should be expressed in terms which may countenance the inadmissible pretension of a right to prescribe the qualifications which a minister from the United States should possess; and that while France is asserting the existence of a disposition on her part to conciliate with sincerity the differences which have arisen, the sincerity of a like disposition on the part of the United States, of which so many demonstrative proofs have been given, should even be indirectly questioned. It is also worthy of observation that the decree of the directory, alleged to be intended to restrain the depredations of French cruisers on our commerce, has not given and cannot give any relief; it enjoins them to conform to all the laws of France relative to cruising and prizes, while these laws are themselves the sources of the depredations of which we have so long, so justly, and so fruitlessly complained.

The law of France, enacted in January last, which subjects to capture and condemnation neutral vessels and their cargoes, if any portion of the latter are of British fabric or produce, although the entire property belong to neutrals, instead of being

rescinded, has lately received a confirmation by the failure of a proposition for its repeal. While this law, which is an unequivocal act of war on the commerce of the nations it attacks, continues in force, those nations can see in the French government only a power regardless of their essential rights, of their independence, and sovereignty; and if they possess the means, they can reconcile nothing with their interest and honor but a firm resistance.

Hitherto, therefore, nothing is discoverable in the conduct of France which ought to change or relax our measures of defence. On the contrary, to extend and invigorate them is our true policy. We have no reason to regret that these measures have been thus far adopted and pursued; and in proportion as we enlarge our view of the portentous and incalculable situation of Europe, we shall discover new and cogent motives for the full development of our energies and resources.

But, in demonstrating by our conduct that we do not fear war in the necessary protection of our rights and honor, we shall give no room to infer that we abandon the desire of peace. An efficient preparation for war can alone ensure peace. It is peace that we have uniformly and perseveringly cultivated; and harmony between us and France may be restored at her option. But to send another minister without more determinate assurances that he would be received, would be an act of humiliation to which the United States ought not to submit. It must, therefore, be left to France, if she is indeed desirous of accommodation, to take the requisite steps.

The United States will steadily observe the maxims by which they have hitherto been governed. They will respect the sacred rights of embassy. And with a sincere disposition on the part of France to desist from hostility, to make reparation for the injuries heretofore inflicted on our commerce, and to do justice in future, there will be no obstacle to the restoration of a friendly intercourse. In making to you this declaration, I give a pledge to France and to the world, that the executive authority of this country still adheres to the humane and pacific policy, which has invariably governed its proceedings, in conformity with the wishes of the other branches of the government, and of the people of the United States. But considering the late manifestations of her policy towards foreign nations, I deem

it a duty deliberately and solemnly to declare my opinion, that whether we negotiate with her or not, vigorous preparations for war will be alike indispensable. These alone will give to us an equal treaty, and insure its observance.[1]

Among the measures of preparation which appear expedient, I take the liberty to recall your attention to the naval establishment. The beneficial effects of the small naval armament provided under the acts of the last session, are known and acknowledged. Perhaps no country ever experienced more sudden and remarkable advantages from any measure of policy than we have derived from the arming for our maritime protection and defence. We ought, without loss of time, to lay the foundation for an increase of our navy, to a size sufficient to guard our coast and protect our trade. Such a naval force as it is doubtless in the power of the United States to create and maintain, would also afford to them the best means of general defence, by facilitating the safe transportation of troops and stores to every part of our extensive coast. To accomplish this important object, a prudent foresight requires that systematical measures be adopted for procuring at all times the requisite

[1] The portion of this speech, which relates to foreign affairs, was adopted from a draught presented by Mr. Wolcott, but probably drawn up in consultation with Mr. Hamilton and others outside of the cabinet. It was so distasteful to Mr. Adams that he persisted in making a modification of the last two paragraphs, so as not to cut off all further chance of initiating a negotiation. The extent of the modification may be readily ascertained by comparison with Mr. Wolcott's draught, which is printed, though not quite according to the original, in Mr. Gibbs's work, vol. ii. pp. 168 – 171. But it fell far short of Mr. Adams's own draught, which now remains to show his wishes at this period. Neither can it be said that the Secretary of State, at least, was not apprised of it, for the sheet on which it is written, has the following indorsement in his handwriting. "b. Negotiating with France." The bearing of this fact is explained elsewhere.

"In a message to both houses of Congress, on the twenty-first day of June last, I expressed my opinion of the impropriety of sending another minister to France, without assurances that he would be received, protected, and privileged according to the law of nations, as the representative of a sovereign State. This opinion was well founded, and my resolution is unchanged. It is not my intention, however, to preclude the possibility of negotiation, or to throw any impediments in the way of an amicable settlement of all controversies with France. I think it proper, therefore, to declare that I shall be at all times ready to nominate, and, if I should be so happy as to obtain the advice and consent of the Senate, to appoint another envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, with full powers and instructions to confer, treat, and conclude with a minister of equal grade, commissioned by the executive directory, on all points in dispute between the two powers. And I judge it proper further to declare, that I shall be at all times ready to receive a suitable character, commissioned and accredited by the government of France."

timber and other supplies. In what manner this shall be done I leave to your consideration.

I will now advert, gentlemen, to some matters of less moment, but proper to be communicated to the national legislature.

After the Spanish garrison had evacuated the posts they occupied at the Natchez and Walnut Hills, the commissioner of the United States commenced his observations to ascertain the point near the Mississippi, which terminated the northernmost part of the thirty-first degree of north latitude. From thence he proceeded to run the boundary line between the United States and Spain. He was afterwards joined by the Spanish commissioner, when the work of the former was confirmed, and they proceeded together to the demarkation of the line. Recent information renders it probable that the southern Indians, either instigated to oppose the demarkation, or jealous of the consequences of suffering white people to run a line over lands to which the Indian title had not been extinguished, have ere this time stopped the progress of the commissioners. And considering the mischiefs which may result from continuing the demarkation, in opposition to the will of the Indian tribes, the great expense attending it, and that the boundaries, which the commissioners have actually established, probably extend at least as far as the Indian title has been extinguished, it will perhaps become expedient and necessary to suspend further proceedings by recalling our commissioner.

The commissioners appointed in pursuance of the fifth article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, between the United States and his Britannic Majesty, to determine what river was truly intended under the name of the river St. Croix mentioned in the treaty of peace, and forming a part of the boundary therein described, have finally decided that question. On the 25th of October they made their declaration that a river called Schoodiac, which falls into Passamaquoddy Bay, at its north-western quarter, was the true St. Croix intended in the treaty of peace, as far as its great fork, where one of its streams comes from the westward and the other from the northward, and that the latter stream is the continuation of the St. Croix to its source. This decision, it is understood, will preclude all contention among individual claimants, as it seems that the Schoodiac and its northern branch, bound the grants of lands which have been

made by the respective adjoining governments. A subordinate question, however, it has been suggested, still remains to be determined. Between the mouth of the St. Croix, as now settled, and what is usually called the Bay of Fundy, lie a number of valuable islands. The commissioners have not continued the boundary line through any channel of these islands, and unless the Bay of Passamaquoddy be a part of the Bay of Fundy, this further adjustment of boundary will be necessary. But it is apprehended that this will not be a matter of any difficulty.

Such progress has been made in the examination and decision of cases of captures and condemnations of American vessels, which were the subject of the seventh article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, between the United States and Great Britain, that it is supposed the commissioners will be able to bring their business to a conclusion in August of the ensuing year.

The commissioners, acting under the twenty-first article of the treaty between the United States and Spain, have adjusted most of the claims of our citizens for losses sustained in consesequence of their vessels and cargoes having been taken by the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, during the late war between France and Spain.

Various circumstances have concurred to delay the execution of the law for augmenting the military establishment. Among these the desire of obtaining the fullest information to direct the best selection of officers. As this object will now be speedily accomplished, it is expected that the raising and organizing of the troops will proceed without obstacle and with effect.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I have directed an estimate of the appropriations which will be necessary for the service of the ensuing year to be laid before you, accompanied with a view of the public receipts and expenditures to a recent period. It will afford you satisfaction to infer the great extent and solidity of the public resources, from the prosperous state of the finances, notwithstanding the unexampled embarrassments which have attended commerce. When you reflect on the conspicuous examples of patriotism and liberality which have been exhibited by our mercantile

fellow-citizens, and how great a proportion of the public resources depends on their enterprise, you will naturally consider, whether their convenience cannot be promoted and reconciled with the security of the revenue by a revision of the system by which the collection is at present regulated.

During your recess, measures have been steadily pursued for effecting the valuations and returns directed by the act of the last session, preliminary to the assessment and collection of a direct tax. No other delays or obstacles have been experienced, except such as were expected to arise from the great extent of our country and the magnitude and novelty of the operation; and enough has been accomplished to assure a fulfilment of the views of the legislature.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I cannot close this address without once more adverting to our political situation, and inculcating the essential importance of uniting in the maintenance of our dearest interests. And I trust that by the temper and wisdom of your proceedings, and by a harmony of measures, we shall secure to our country that weight and respect to which it is so justly entitled.[1]

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

I thank you for this address, so conformable to the spirit of our Constitution, and the established character of the Senate of the United States, for wisdom, honor, and virtue.

I have seen no real evidence of any change of system or disposition in the French republic towards the United States. Although the officious interference of individuals, without public character or authority, is not entitled to any credit, yet it deserves to be considered, whether that temerity and imperti-

[1] A large part of this speech was taken from the draught of Mr. Wolcott and Mr. Pickering.

nence of individuals affecting to interfere in public affairs between France and the United States, whether by their secret correspondence or otherwise, and intended to impose upon the people and separate them from their government, ought not to be inquired into and corrected.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your assurances that you will bestow that consideration on the several objects pointed out in my communication, which they respectively merit.

If I have participated in that understanding, sincerity, and constancy, which have been displayed by my fellow-citizens and countrymen, in the most trying times, and critical situations, and fulfilled my duties to them, I am happy. The testimony of the Senate of the United States, in my favor, is an high and honorable reward, which receives, as it merits, my grateful acknowledgments. My zealous coöperation in measures necessary to secure us justice and consideration may be always depended on.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MR. SPEAKER, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

My sincere acknowledgments are due to the House of Representatives of the United States for this excellent address, so consonant to the character of representatives of a great and free people. The judgment and feelings of a nation, I believe, were never more truly expressed by their representatives, than those of our constituents by your decided declaration, that, with our means of defence, our interest and honor command us to repel a predatory warfare against the unquestionable rights of neutral commerce; that it becomes the United States to be as determined in resistance as they have been patient in suffering and condescending in negotiation; that while those who direct the affairs of France persist in the enforcement of decrees so hostile to our essential rights, their conduct forbids us to confide in any of their professions of amity; that an adequate naval force must be considered as an important object of

national policy; and that whether negotiations with France are resumed or not, vigorous preparations for war will be alike indispensable.

The generous disdain you so coolly and deliberately express of a reliance on foreign protection, wanting no foreign guaranty of our liberties, resolving to maintain our national independence against every attempt to despoil us of this inestimable treasure, will meet the full approbation of every sound understanding, and exulting applauses from the heart of every faithful American.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your candid approbation of my sentiments on the subject of negotiation, and for the declaration of your opinion, that the policy of extending and invigorating our measures of defence, and the adoption, with prudent foresight, of such systematical measures as may be expedient for calling forth the energies of our country wherever the national exigencies may require, whether on the ocean, or on our own territory, will demand your sedulous attention.

At the same time I take the liberty to assure you, it shall be my vigilant endeavor that no illusory professions shall seduce me into any abandonment of the rights which belong to the United States as a free and independent nation.

JOHN ADAMS.

SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,

3 DECEMBER, 1799.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

It is with peculiar satisfaction that I meet the sixth Congress of the United States of America. Coming from all parts of the Union, at this critical and interesting period, the members must be fully possessed of the sentiments and wishes of our constituents.

The flattering prospects of abundance, from the labors of the people by land and by sea; the prosperity of our extended

commerce, notwithstanding interruptions occasioned by the belligerent state of a great part of the world; the return of health, industry, and trade, to those cities which have lately been afflicted with disease; and the various and inestimable advantages, civil and religious, which, secured under our happy frame of government, are continued to us unimpaired, demand of the whole American people sincere thanks to a benevolent Deity for the merciful dispensations of his providence.

But, while these numerous blessings are recollected, it is a painful duty to advert to the ungrateful return which has been made for them by some of the people in certain counties of Pennsylvania, where, seduced by the arts and misrepresentations of designing men, they have openly resisted the law directing the valuation of houses and lands. Such defiance was given to the civil authority as rendered hopeless all further attempts by judicial process to enforce the execution of the law; and it became necessary to direct a military force to be employed, consisting of some companies of regular troops, volunteers, and militia, by whose zeal and activity, in coöperation with the judicial power, order and submission were restored, and many of the offenders arrested. Of these, some have been convicted of misdemeanors, and others, charged with various crimes, remain to be tried.

To give due effect to the civil administration of government, and to insure a just execution of the laws, a revision and amendment of the judiciary system is indispensably necessary. In this extensive country it cannot but happen that numerous questions respecting the interpretation of the laws, and the rights and duties of officers and citizens, must arise. On the one hand, the laws should be executed; on the other, individuals should be guarded from oppression. Neither of these objects is sufficiently assured under the present organization of the judicial department. I therefore earnestly recommend the subject to your serious consideration.

Persevering in the pacific and humane policy, which had been invariably professed and sincerely pursued by the executive authority of the United States, when indications were made, on the part of the French republic, of a disposition to accommodate the existing differences between the two countries, I felt it to be my duty to prepare for meeting their advances by

a nomination of ministers upon certain conditions, which the honor of our country dictated, and which its moderation had given it a right to prescribe. The assurances which were required of the French government, previous to the departure of our envoys, have been given through their minister of foreign relations; and I have directed them to proceed on their mission to Paris. They have full power to conclude a treaty, subject to the constitutional advice and consent of the Senate. The characters of these gentlemen are sure pledges to their country that nothing incompatible with its honor or interest, nothing inconsistent with our obligations of good faith or friendship to any other nation, will be stipulated.

It appearing probable, from the information I received, that our commercial intercourse with some ports in the island of St. Domingo might safely be renewed, I took such steps as seemed to me expedient to ascertain that point. The result being satisfactory, I then, in conformity with the act of Congress on the subject, directed the restraints and prohibitions of that intercourse to be discontinued, on terms which were made known by proclamation. Since the renewal of this intercourse, our citizens trading to those ports, with their property, have been duly respected, and privateering from those ports has ceased.

In examining the claims of British subjects by the commissioners at Philadelphia, acting under the sixth article of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with Great Britain, a difference of opinion, on points deemed essential in the interpretation of that article, has arisen between the commissioners appointed by the United States, and the other members of that board; from which the former have thought it their duty to withdraw. It is sincerely to be regretted, that the execution of an article produced by a mutual spirit of amity and justice, should have been thus unavoidably interrupted. It is, however, confidently expected that the same spirit of amity and the same sense of justice, in which it originated, will lead to satisfactory explanations. In consequence of the obstacles to the progress of the commission in Philadelphia, his Britannic Majesty has directed the commissioners appointed by him under the seventh article of the treaty, relating to British captures of American vessels, to withdraw from the board sitting in London; but

with the express declaration of his determination to fulfil with punctuality and good faith the engagements which his majesty has contracted by his treaty with the United States; and that they will be instructed to resume their functions, whenever the obstacles, which impede the progress of the commission at Philadelphia, shall be removed. It being in like manner my sincere determination, so far as the same depends on me, that, with equal punctuality and good faith, the engagements contracted by the United States, in their treaties with his Britannic majesty, shall be fulfilled, I shall immediately instruct our minister at London to endeavor to obtain the explanations necessary to a just performance of those engagements on the part of the United States. With such dispositions on both sides, I cannot entertain a doubt that all difficulties will soon be removed, and that the two boards will then proceed, and bring the business committed to them, respectively, to a satisfactory conclusion.

The act of Congress, relative to the seat of the government of the United States, requiring that on the first Monday of December next, it should be transferred from Philadelphia to the district chosen for its permanent seat, it is proper for me to inform you, that the commissioners appointed to provide suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress, and of the President, and of the public offices of the government, have made a report of the state of the buildings designed for those purposes in the city of Washington; from which they conclude that the removal of the seat of government to that place, at the time required, will be practicable, and the accommodation satisfactory. Their report will be laid before you.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I shall direct the estimates of the appropriations necessary for the service of the ensuing year, together with an account of the revenue and expenditure, to be laid before you. During a period, in which a great portion of the civilized world has been involved in a war unusually calamitous and destructive, it was not to be expected that the United States could be exempted from extraordinary burdens. Although the period is not arrived when the measures adopted to secure our country against foreign attacks can be renounced, yet it is alike necessary for the honor of the government and the satisfaction of the com-

munity, that an exact economy should be maintained. I invite you, gentlemen, to investigate the different branches of the public expenditure. The examination will lead to beneficial retrenchments, or produce a conviction of the wisdom of the measures to which the expenditure relates.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

At a period like the present, when momentous changes are occurring, and every hour is preparing new and great events in the political world, when a spirit of war is prevalent in almost every nation, with whose affairs the interests of the United States have any connection, unsafe and precarious would be our situation, were we to neglect the means of maintaining our just rights. The result of the mission to France is uncertain; but however it may terminate, a steady perseverance in a system of national defence, commensurate with our resources and the situation of our country, is an obvious dictate of wisdom. For, remotely as we are placed from the belligerent nations, and desirous as we are, by doing justice to all, to avoid offence to any, nothing short of the power of repelling aggressions will secure to our country a rational prospect of escaping the calamities of war or national degradation. As to myself, it is my anxious desire so to execute the trust reposed in me, as to render the people of the United States prosperous and happy. I rely, with entire confidence, on your coöperation in objects equally your care; and that our mutual labors will serve to increase and confirm union among our fellow-citizens, and an unshaken attachment to our government.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I thank you for this address. I wish you all possible success and satisfaction in your deliberations on the means which have a tendency to promote and extend our national interests and happiness; and I assure you that in all your measures directed

to those great objects, you may at all times rely with the highest confidence on my cordial coöperation.

The praise of the Senate, so judiciously conferred on the promptitude and zeal of the troops called to suppress the insurrection, as it falls from so high authority, must make a deep impression, both as a terror to the disobedient, and an encouragement of such as do well.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

This very respectful address from the representatives of the people of the United States, at their first assembly after a fresh election, under the strong impression of the public opinion and national sense at this interesting and singular crisis of our public affairs, has excited my sensibility, and receives my sincere and grateful acknowledgments.[1]

As long as we can maintain with harmony and affection the honor of our country, consistently with its peace, externally and internally, while that is attainable, or in war, when that becomes necessary, assert its real independence and sovereignty, and support the constitutional energies and dignity of its government, we may be perfectly sure, under the smiles of Divine Providence, that we shall effectually promote and extend our national interest and happiness.

The applause of the Senate and House of Representatives so justly bestowed upon the volunteers and militia for their zealous and active coöperation with the judicial power, which has restored order and submission to the laws, as it comes with peculiar weight and propriety from the legislature, cannot fail to have an extensive and permanent effect for the support of

[1] This address was drawn by John Marshall, and undoubtedly expressed his own sentiments, and those of the majority, including nearly all the southern members, of the federal party. The vexation which it caused to those who were dissatisfied with the policy, but who could not venture to declare themselves against it, is curiously displayed in Mr. Wolcott's letter to Fisher Ames, Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 314. The answer of the Senate shows the prevalence of a different influence.

government upon all those ingenuous minds who receive delight from the approving and animating voice of their country.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ADDRESS OF THE SENATE,

ON THE DEATH OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

23 DECEMBER, 1799.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I receive, with the most respectful and affectionate sentiments, in this impressive address, the obliging expressions of your regard for the loss our country has sustained in the death of her most esteemed, beloved, and admired citizen.

In the multitude of my thoughts and recollections on this melancholy event, you will permit me only to say, that I have seen him in the days of adversity, in some of the scenes of his deepest distress and most trying perplexities; I have also attended him in his highest elevation, and most prosperous felicity, with uniform admiration of his wisdom, moderation, and constancy.

Among all our original associates in that memorable league of the continent in 1774, which first expressed the sovereign will of a free nation in America, he was the only one remaining in the general government.

Although, with a constitution more enfeebled than his at an age when he thought it necessary to prepare for retirement, I feel myself alone, bereaved of my last brother, yet I derive a strong consolation from the unanimous disposition which appears, in all ages and classes, to mingle their sorrows with mine on this common calamity to the world.

The life of our Washington cannot suffer by a comparison with those of other countries who have been most celebrated and exalted by fame. The attributes and decorations of royalty could have only served to eclipse the majesty of those virtues which made him, from being a modest citizen, a more resplendent luminary. Misfortune, had he lived, could hereafter have sullied his glory only with those superficial minds, who, believing that characters and actions are marked by success alone,

rarely deserve to enjoy it. Malice could never blast his honor, and envy made him a singular exception to her universal rule. For himself, he had lived enough to life and to glory. For his fellow-citizens, if their prayers could have been answered, he would have been immortal. For me, his departure is at a most unfortunate moment. Trusting, however, in the wise and righteous dominion of Providence over the passions of men, and the results of their counsels and actions, as well as over their lives, nothing remains for me but humble resignation.

His example is now complete, and it will teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens, and men, not only in the present age, but in future generations, as long as our history shall be read. If a Trajan found a Pliny, a Marcus Aurelius can never want biographers, eulogists, or historians.

JOHN ADAMS.

SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS,

22 NOVEMBER, 1800.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Immediately after the adjournment of Congress at their last session in Philadelphia, I gave directions, in compliance with the laws, for the removal of the public offices, records, and property. These directions have been executed, and the public officers have since resided, and conducted the ordinary business of the government, in this place.

I congratulate the people of the United States on the assembling of Congress at the permanent seat of their government; and I congratulate you, gentlemen, on the prospect of a residence not to be changed. Although there is cause to apprehend that accommodations are not now so complete as might be wished, yet there is great reason to believe that this inconvenience will cease with the present session.

It would be unbecoming the representatives of this nation to assemble, for the first time, in this solemn temple, without looking up to the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and imploring his blessing.

May this territory be the residence of virtue and happiness! In this city may that piety and virtue, that wisdom and magnanimity, that constancy and self-government, which adorned the great character whose name it bears, be forever held in veneration! Here, and throughout our country, may simple manners, pure morals, and true religion, flourish forever!

It is with you, gentlemen, to consider whether the local powers over the district of Columbia, vested by the Constitution in the Congress of the United States, shall be immediately exercised. If, in your opinion, this important trust ought now to be executed, you cannot fail, while performing it, to take into view the future probable situation of the territory for the happiness of which you are about to provide. You will consider it as the capital of a great nation, advancing, with unexampled rapidity, in arts, in commerce, in wealth, and in population; and possessing within itself those energies and resources, which, if not thrown away or lamentably misdirected, secure to it a long course of prosperity and self-government.

In compliance with a law of the last session of Congress, the officers and soldiers of the temporary army have been discharged. It affords real pleasure to recollect the honorable testimony they gave of the patriotic motives which brought them into the service of their country by the readiness and regularity with which they returned to the station of private citizens.

It is in every point of view of such primary importance to carry the laws into prompt and faithful execution, and to render that part of the administration of justice which the Constitution and laws devolve on the federal courts, as convenient to the people as may consist with their present circumstances, that I cannot omit once more to recommend to your serious consideration the judiciary system of the United States. No subject is more interesting than this to the public happiness, and to none can those improvements which may have been suggested by experience, be more beneficially applied.

A treaty of amity and commerce with the King of Prussia has been concluded and ratified. The ratifications have been exchanged, and I have directed the treaty to be promulgated by proclamation.

The difficulties, which suspended the execution of the sixth article of our treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with

Great Britain, have not yet been removed. The negotiation on this subject is still depending. As it must be for the interest and honor of both nations to adjust this difference with good faith, I indulge confidently the expectation that the sincere endeavors of the government of the United States to bring it to an amicable termination, will not be disappointed.

The envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary from the United States to France, were received by the first Consul with the respect due to their character; and three persons, with equal powers, were appointed to treat with them. Although at the date of the last official intelligence the negotiation had not terminated, yet it is to be hoped that our efforts to effect an accommodation will at length meet with a success proportioned to the sincerity with which they have been so often repeated.

While our best endeavors for the preservation of harmony with all nations will continue to be used, the experience of the world and our own experience admonish us of the insecurity of trusting too confidently to their success. We cannot, without committing a dangerous imprudence, abandon those measures of self-protection, which are adapted to our situation, and to which, notwithstanding our pacific policy, the violence and injustice of others may again compel us to resort. While our vast extent of sea-coast, the commercial and agricultural habits of our people, the great capital they will continue to trust on the ocean, suggest the system of defence which will be most beneficial to ourselves, our distance from Europe, and our resources for maritime strength, will enable us to employ it with effect. Seasonable and systematic arrangements, so far as our resources will justify, for a navy adapted to defensive war, and which may in case of necessity be quickly brought into use, seem to be as much recommended by a wise and true economy as by a just regard for our future tranquillity, for the safety of our shores, and for the protection of our property committed to the ocean.

The present navy of the United States, called suddenly into existence by a great national exigency, has raised us in our own esteem; and by the protection afforded to our commerce, has effected to the extent of our expectations the objects for which it was created.

In connection with a navy ought to be contemplated the

fortification of some of our principal seaports and harbors. A variety of considerations, which will readily suggest themselves, urge an attention to this measure of precaution. To give security to our principal ports, considerable sums have already been expended, but the works remain incomplete. It is for Congress to determine whether additional appropriations shall be made, in order to render competent to the intended purposes the fortifications which have been commenced.

The manufacture of arms within the United States still invites the attention of the national legislature. At a considerable expense to the public this manufactory has been brought to such a state of maturity as, with continued encouragement, will supersede the necessity of future importations from foreign countries.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I shall direct the estimates of the appropriations necessary for the ensuing year, together with an account of the public revenue and expenditure to a late period, to be laid before you.

I observe with much satisfaction that the product of the revenue during the present year has been more considerable than during any former equal period. This result affords conclusive evidence of the great resources of this country, and of the wisdom and efficiency of the measures which have been adopted by Congress for the protection of commerce and preservation of public credit.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,
AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

As one of the grand community of nations, our attention is irresistibly drawn to the important scenes which surround us. If they have exhibited an uncommon portion of calamity, it is the province of humanity to deplore, and of wisdom to avoid, the causes which may have produced it. If, turning our eyes homeward, we find reason to rejoice at the prospect which presents itself; if we perceive the interior of our country prosperous, free, and happy; if all enjoy in safety, under the protection of laws emanating only from the general will, the fruits of their own labor, we ought to fortify and cling to those institutions which have been the source of much real felicity,

and resist with unabating perseverance the progress of those dangerous innovations which may diminish their influence.

To your patriotism, gentlemen, has been confided the honorable duty of guarding the public interests; and while the past is to your country a sure pledge that it will be faithfully discharged, permit me to assure you that your labors to promote the general happiness will receive from me the most zealous coöperation.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

For this excellent address, so respectful to the memory of my illustrious predecessor, which I receive from the Senate of the United States at this time and in this place, with peculiar satisfaction, I pray you to accept of my unfeigned acknowledgments. With you I ardently hope that permanence and stability will be communicated as well to the government itself, as to its beautiful and commodious seat. With you I deplore the death of that hero and sage who bore so honorable and efficient a part in the establishment of both. Great, indeed, would have been my gratification, if his sum of earthly happiness had been completed by seeing the government thus peaceably convened at this place, himself at its head. But while we submit to the decisions of heaven, whose counsels are inscrutable to us, we cannot but hope that the members of Congress, the officers of government, and all who inhabit the city or the country, will retain his virtues in lively recollection, and make his patriotism, morals, and piety, models for imitation.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your assurance that the several subjects for legislative consideration, recommended in my communication to both houses, shall receive from the Senate a deliberate and candid attention.

With you, gentlemen, I sincerely deprecate all spirit of innovation, which may weaken the sacred bond that connects the different parts of this nation and government; and with you I trust, that, under the protection of Divine Providence, the wisdom and virtue of our citizens will deliver our national compact

unimpaired to a free, prosperous, happy, and grateful posterity. To this end it is my fervent prayer, that, in this city, the fountains of wisdom may be always open, and the streams of eloquence forever flow. Here may the youth of this extensive country forever look up without disappointment, not only to the monuments and memorials of the dead, but to the examples of the living, in the members of Congress and officers of government, for finished models of all those virtues, graces, talents, and accomplishments, which constitute the dignity of human nature, and lay the only foundation for the prosperity or duration of empires.

JOHN ADAMS.

REPLY TO THE ANSWER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MR. SPEAKER, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Compelled by the habits of a long life as well as by all the principles of society and government which I could ever understand and believe, to consider the great body of the people as the source of all legitimate authority, no less than of all efficient power, it is impossible for me to receive this address from the immediate representatives of the American people, at this time and in this place, without emotions which it would be improper to express, if any language could convey them.

May the spirit which animated the great founder of this city, descend to future generations; and may the wisdom, magnanimity, and steadiness, which marked the events of his public life, be imitated in all succeeding ages!

I thank you, gentlemen, for your assurance that the judiciary system shall receive your deliberate attention.

With you, gentlemen, I sincerely hope, that the final result of the negotiations now pending with France, may prove as fortunate to our country as they have been commenced with sincerity, and prosecuted with deliberation and caution. With you I cordially agree, that so long as predatory war is carried on against our commerce, we should sacrifice the interests and disappoint the expectations of our constituents, should we for a moment relax that system of maritime defence, which has

resulted in such beneficial effects. With you I confidently believe, that few persons can be found within the United States, who do not admit that a navy, well organized, must constitute the natural and efficient defence of this country against all foreign hostility.

Those who recollect the distress and danger to this country in former periods from the want of arms, must exult in the assurance from their representatives, that we shall soon rival foreign countries, not only in the number, but in the quality of arms, completed from our own manufactories.

With you, gentlemen, I fully agree that the great increase of revenue is a proof that the measures of maritime defence were founded in wisdom. This policy has raised us in the esteem of foreign nations. That national spirit and those latent energies which had not been and are not yet fully known to any, were not entirely forgotten by those who have lived long enough to see in former times their operation and some of their effects. Our fellow-citizens were undoubtedly prepared to meet every event which national honor or national security could render necessary. These it is to be hoped are secured at the cheapest and easiest rate. If not, they will be secured at more expense.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your assurance that the various subjects recommended to your consideration shall receive your deliberate attention. No further evidence is wanting to convince me of the zeal and sincerity with which the House of Representatives regard the public good.

I pray you, gentlemen, to accept of my best wishes for your health and happiness.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGES TO CONGRESS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

NOMINATING ENVOYS TO FRANCE.

31 MAY, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I nominate General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina, Francis Dana, Chief Justice of the State of Massachusetts, and General John Marshall, of Virginia, to be jointly and severally envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to the French republic.

After mature deliberation on the critical situation of our relations with France, which have long engaged my serious attention, I have determined on these nominations of persons to negotiate with the French republic, to dissipate umbrages, to remove prejudices, to rectify errors, and adjust all differences by a treaty between the two powers.

It is, in the present critical and singular circumstances, of great importance to engage the confidence of the great portions of the Union, in the characters employed, and the measures which may be adopted. I have therefore thought it expedient to nominate persons of talents and integrity, long known and intrusted in the three great divisions of the Union; and, at the same time, to provide against the cases of death, absence, indisposition, or other impediment, to invest any one or more of them with full powers.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

RESPECTING THE TERRITORY OF THE NATCHEZ.

12 JUNE, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I have received information from the commissioner appointed on the part of the United States, pursuant to the third article of our treaty with Spain, that the running and marking of the boundary line between the colonies of East and West Florida and the territory of the United States, have been delayed by the officers of his Catholic Majesty; and that they have declared their intention to maintain his jurisdiction, and to suspend the withdrawing of his troops from the military posts they occupy within the territory of the United States, until the two governments shall, by negotiation, have settled the meaning of the second article respecting the withdrawing of the troops, garrisons, or settlements of either party in the territory of the other; that is, whether, when the Spanish garrisons withdraw, they are to leave the works standing, or to demolish them; and until, by an additional article to the treaty, the real property of the inhabitants shall be secured; and likewise, until the Spanish officers are sure the Indians will be pacific. The two first questions, if to be determined by negotiation, might be made subjects of discussion for years; and as no limitation of time can be prescribed to the other, or certainty in the opinion of the Spanish officers that the Indians will be pacific, it will be impossible to suffer it to remain an obstacle to the fulfilment of the treaty on the part of Spain.

To remove the first difficulty, I have determined to leave it to the discretion of the officers of his Catholic Majesty, when they withdraw his troops from the forts within the territory of the United States, either to leave the works standing, or to demolish them; and, to remove the second, I shall cause an assurance to be published, and to be particularly communicated to the minister of his Catholic Majesty, and to the Governor of Louisiana, that the settlers or occupants of the lands in question shall not be disturbed in their possessions by the troops of the

United States; but, on the contrary, that they shall be protected in all their lawful claims; and, to prevent or remove every doubt on this point, it merits the consideration of Congress, whether it will not be expedient immediately to pass a law, giving positive assurances to those inhabitants, who, by fair and regular grants, or by occupancy, have obtained legal titles or equitable claims to lands in that country, prior to the final ratification of the treaty between the United States and Spain, on the twenty-fifth of April, 1796.

This country is rendered peculiarly valuable by its inhabitants, who are represented to amount to nearly four thousand, generally well affected, and much attached to the United States, and zealous for the establishment of a government under their authority.

I therefore recommend to your consideration the expediency of erecting a government in the district of the Natchez, similar to that established for the territory north-west of the river Ohio, but with certain modifications relative to titles or claims of land, whether of individuals or companies, or to claims of jurisdiction of any individual State.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

ON AFFAIRS WITH ALGIERS.

23 JUNE, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The Dey of Algiers has manifested a predilection for American built vessels, and, in consequence, has desired that two vessels might be constructed and equipped, as cruisers, according to the choice and taste of Captain O'Brien. The cost of two such vessels, built with live oak and cedar, and coppered, with guns and all other equipments complete, is estimated at forty-five thousand dollars. The expense of navigating them to Algiers may, perhaps, be compensated by the freight of the stores with which they may be loaded on account of our stipulations by treaty with the Dey.

A compliance with the Dey's request appears to me to be of serious importance. He will repay the whole expense of building and equipping the two vessels; and as he has advanced the price of our peace with Tripoli, and become pledged for that of Tunis, the United States seem to be under peculiar obligations to provide this accommodation; and I trust that Congress will authorize the advance of money necessary for that purpose.

It also appears to be of importance to place at Algiers a person as consul, in whose integrity and ability much confidence may be placed, to whom a considerable latitude of discretion should be allowed for the interest of the United States in relation to their commerce. That country is so remote as to render it impracticable for the consul to ask and receive instructions in sudden emergencies. He may sometimes find it necessary to make instant engagements for money, or its equivalent, to prevent greater expenses or more serious evils. We can hardly hope to escape occasions of discontent proceeding from the regency, or arising from the misconduct or even the misfortunes of our commercial vessels navigating in the Mediterranean sea; and unless the causes of discontent are speedily removed, the resentment of the regency may be exerted with precipitation on our defenceless citizens and their property, and thus occasion a tenfold expense to the United States. For these reasons it appears to me to be expedient to vest the consul at Algiers with a degree of discretionary power, which can be requisite in no other situation. And to encourage a person deserving the public confidence to accept so expensive and responsible a situation, it appears indispensable to allow him a handsome salary. I should confer on such a consul a superintending power over the consulates for the States of Tunis and Tripoli, especially in respect to pecuniary engagements, which should not be made without his approbation.

While the present salary of two thousand dollars a year appears adequate to the consulates of Tunis and Tripoli, twice that sum probably will be requisite for Algiers.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION RESPECTING SPAIN.

3 JULY, 1797.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The whole of the intelligence which has for some time past been received from abroad, the correspondences between this government and the ministers of the belligerent powers residing here, and the advices from the officers of the United States, civil and military, upon the frontiers, all conspire to show in a very strong light the critical situation of our country. That Congress might be enabled to form a more perfect judgment of it, and of the measures necessary to be taken, I have directed the proper officers to prepare such collections of extracts from the public correspondences as might afford the clearest information. The reports made to me from the Secretary of State and the Secretary at War, with the collection of documents from each of them, are now communicated to both houses of Congress. I have desired that the message, reports, and documents, may be considered as confidential, merely that the members of both houses of Congress may be apprised of their contents before they should be made public. As soon as the houses shall have heard them, I shall submit to their discretion the publication of the whole or any such parts of them as they shall judge necessary or expedient for the public good.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

ANNOUNCING THE RATIFICATION OF AN AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION.

8 JANUARY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I have now an opportunity to transmit to Congress a report of the Secretary of State, with a copy of an act of the legis-

lature of the State of Kentucky, consenting to the ratification of the amendment of the Constitution of the United States, proposed by Congress in their resolution of the second day of December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, relative to the suability of States. This amendment having been adopted by three fourths of the several States, may now be declared to be a part of the Constitution of the United States.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

RELATIVE TO A FRENCH PRIVATEER.

5 FEBRUARY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

I have received a letter from his Excellency Charles Pinckney, Esquire, Governor of the State of South Carolina, dated on the twenty-second of October, 1797, inclosing a number of depositions of witnesses to several captures and outrages committed within and near the limits of the United States by a French privateer belonging to Cape François or Monte Christo, called the Vertitude or Fortitude, and commanded by a person of the name of Jordon or Jourdain, and particularly upon an English merchant ship, named the Oracabissa, which he first plundered, and then burned with the rest of her cargo of great value, within the territory of the United States, in the harbor of Charleston, on the seventeenth day of October last, copies of which letter and depositions, and also of several other depositions relative to the same subject, received from the collector of Charleston, are herewith communicated.

Whenever the channels of diplomatical communication between the United States and France shall be opened, I shall demand satisfaction for the insult and reparation for the injury.

I have transmitted these papers to Congress, not so much for the purpose of communicating an account of so daring a violation of the territory of the United States, as to show the propriety and necessity of enabling the executive authority of government to take measures for protecting the citizens of the United States, and such foreigners as have a right to enjoy their

peace and the protection of their laws within their limits, in that as well as some other harbors, which are equally exposed.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

TRANSMITTING DESPATCHES FROM FRANCE.

5 MARCH, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The first despatches from our envoys extraordinary, since their arrival at Paris, were received at the Secretary of State's office, at a late hour the last evening. They are all in a character, which will require some days to be deciphered, except the last, which is dated the eighth of January, 1798. The contents of this letter are of so much importance to be immediately made known to Congress and to the public, especially to the mercantile part of our fellow-citizens, that I have thought it my duty to communicate them to both Houses, without loss of time.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

TRANSMITTING DESPATCHES FROM FRANCE.

19 MARCH, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The despatches from the envoys extraordinary of the United States to the French republic, which were mentioned in my message to both houses of Congress of the fifth instant, have been examined and maturely considered.

While I feel a satisfaction in informing you that their exertions for the adjustment of the differences between the two nations have been sincere and unremitted, it is incumbent on me to declare, that I perceive no ground of expectation that the objects of their mission can be accomplished on terms compatible with the safety, honor, or the essential interests of the nation.

This result cannot with justice be attributed to any want of moderation on the part of this government, or to any indisposition to forego secondary interests for the preservation of peace. Knowing it to be my duty and believing it to be your wish, as well as that of the great body of the people, to avoid, by all reasonable concessions, any participation in the contentions of Europe, the powers vested in our envoys were commensurate with a liberal and pacific policy, and that high confidence which might justly be reposed in the abilities, patriotism, and integrity of the characters to whom the negotiation was committed. After a careful review of the whole subject, with the aid of all the information I have received, I can discern nothing, which could have insured or contributed to success, that has been omitted on my part, and nothing further which can be attempted, consistently with maxims for which our country has contended at every hazard, and which constitute the basis of our national sovereignty.

Under these circumstances I cannot forbear to reiterate the recommendations which have been formerly made, and to exhort you to adopt, with promptitude, decision, and unanimity, such measures as the ample resources of the country afford, for the protection of our seafaring and commercial citizens, for the defence of any exposed portions of our territory, for replenishing our arsenals, establishing founderies and military manufactories, and to provide such efficient revenue as will be necessary to defray extraordinary expenses, and supply the deficiencies which may be occasioned by depredations on our commerce.

The present state of things is so essentially different from that in which instructions were given to collectors to restrain vessels of the United States from sailing in an armed condition, that the principle on which those orders were issued, has ceased to exist. I therefore deem it proper to inform Congress, that I no longer conceive myself justifiable in continuing them, unless in particular cases, where there may be reasonable ground of suspicion that such vessels are intended to be employed contrary to law.

In all your proceedings, it will be important to manifest a zeal, vigor, and concert, in defence of the national rights, proportioned to the danger with which they are threatened.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

TRANSMITTING DESPATCHES FROM FRANCE.

3 APRIL, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

In compliance with the request of the House of Representatives, expressed in their resolution of the second of this month, I transmit to both houses those instructions to and despatches from the envoys extraordinary to the French republic, which were mentioned in my message of the nineteenth of March last, omitting only some names and a few expressions descriptive of the persons.

I request that they may be considered in confidence, until the members of Congress are fully possessed of their contents, and shall have had opportunity to deliberate on the consequences of their publication; after which time, I submit them to your wisdom.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH FRANCE.

21 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

While I congratulate you on the arrival of General Marshall, one of our late envoys extraordinary to the French republic, at a place of safety, where he is justly held in honor, I think it my duty to communicate to you a letter received by him from Mr. Gerry, the only one of the three who has not received his *congé*. This letter, together with another from the minister of foreign relations to him, of the third of April, and his answer of the fourth, will show the situation in which he remains, his intentions, and prospects.

I presume that before this time he has received fresh instruc-

tions (a copy of which accompanies this message) to consent to no loans; and therefore the negotiation may be considered at an end.

I will never send another minister to France, without assurances that he will be received, respected, and honored as the representative of a great, free, powerful, and independent nation.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

TRANSMITTING A LETTER FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON.

17 JULY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

Believing that the letter received this morning from Genera Washington will give high satisfaction to the Senate, I transmit them a copy of it, and congratulate them and the public on this great event, the General's acceptance of his appointment as Lieutenant-General and Commander-in-chief of the army.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

RESPECTING CERTAIN ACTS OF BRITISH NAVAL OFFICERS.

8 JANUARY, 1799.

In compliance with your desire, expressed in your resolution of the 2d of this month, I lay before you an extract of a letter from George C. Morton, acting consul of the United States at the Havana, dated the 18th of November, 1798, to the Secretary of State, with a copy of a letter from him to L. Trezevant and William Timmons, Esquires, with their answer. Although your request extends no further than such information as has been received, yet it may be a satisfaction to you to know, that as soon as this intelligence was communicated to me, circular orders were given by my direction to all the commanders of our vessels of war, a copy of which is also herewith transmitted. I

also directed this intelligence and these orders to be communicated to his Britannic Majesty's envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the United States, and to our minister plenipotentiary to the court of Great Britain, with instructions to him to make the proper representation to that government upon this subject.

It is but justice to say, that this is the first instance of misbehavior of any of the British officers towards our vessels of war, that has come to my knowledge. According to all the representations that I have seen, the flag of the United States, and their officers and men, have been treated by the civil and military authority of the British nation, in Nova Scotia, the West India islands, and on the ocean, with uniform civility, politeness, and friendship. I have no doubt that this first instance of misconduct will be readily corrected.

JOHN ADAMS.

CIRCULAR,

To the Commanders of Armed Vessels in the Service of the United States, given at the Navy Department, December 29th, 1798.

SIR, — It is the positive command of the President that on no pretence whatever you permit the public vessel of war under your command to be detained or searched, nor any of the officers or men belonging to her to be taken from her, by the ships or vessels of any foreign nation, so long as you are in a capacity to repel such outrage on the honor of the American flag. If force should be exerted to compel your submission, you are to resist that force to the utmost of your power, and when overpowered by superior force, you are to strike your flag, and thus yield your vessel as well as your men; but never your men without your vessel.

You will remember, however, that your demeanor be respectful and friendly to the vessels and people of all nations in amity with the United States; and that you avoid as carefully the commission of, as the submission to, insult or injury.

I have the honor to be, &c.

BEN. STODDERT.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

TRANSMITTING A FRENCH DECREE RESPECTING NEUTRAL SAILORS.

28 JANUARY, 1799.

An edict of the executive directory of the French republic of the 29th of October, 1798, inclosed in a letter from our minister plenipotentiary in London, of the 16th of November, is of so much importance, that it cannot be too soon communicated to you and the public.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

RESPECTING THE SUSPENSION OF A FRENCH DECREE

15 FEBRUARY, 1799.

In pursuance of the request in your resolve of yesterday, I lay before you such information as I have received, touching a suspension of the *arrêt* of the French republic communicated to your house by my message of the 28th of January last. But if the execution of that *arrêt* be suspended, or even if it were repealed, it should be remembered that the *arrêt* of the executive directory of the 2d of March, 1797, remains in force, the third article of which subjects, explicitly and exclusively, American seamen to be treated as pirates, if found on board ships of the enemies of France.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

NOMINATING AN ENVOY TO FRANCE.

18 FEBRUARY, 1799.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I transmit to you a document, which seems to be intended to be a compliance with a condition mentioned at the conclusion of my message to Congress of the twenty-first of June last.

Always disposed and ready to embrace every plausible appearance of probability of preserving or restoring tranquillity, I nominate William Vans Murray, our minister resident at the Hague, to be minister plenipotentiary of the United States to the French republic.

If the Senate shall advise and consent to his appointment, effectual care shall be taken in his instructions that he shall not go to France without direct and unequivocal assurances from the French government, signified by their minister of foreign relations, that he shall be received in character, shall enjoy the privileges attached to his character by the law of nations, and that a minister of equal rank, title, and powers, shall be appointed to treat with him, to discuss and conclude all controversies between the two republics by a new treaty.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

NOMINATING THREE ENVOYS TO FRANCE.

25 FEBRUARY, 1799.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

The proposition of a fresh negotiation with France, in consequence of advances made by the French government, has excited so general an attention and so much conversation, as to have given occasion to many manifestations of the public opinion; from which it appears to me that a new modification of the embassy will give more general satisfaction to the legislature and to the nation, and perhaps better answer the purposes we have in view.

It is upon this supposition and with this expectation that I now nominate

Oliver Ellsworth, Esquire, Chief Justice of the United States;

Patrick Henry, Esquire, late Governor of Virginia; and

William Vans Murray, Esquire, our minister resident at the Hague; to be envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to the French republic, with full powers to discuss and settle, by a treaty, all controversies between the United States and France.

It is not intended that the two former of these gentlemen shall embark for Europe, until they shall have received, from the Executive Directory, assurances, signified by their secretary of foreign relations, that they shall be received in character, that they shall enjoy all the prerogatives attached to that character by the law of nations, and that a minister or ministers, of equal powers, shall be appointed and commissioned to treat with them.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

ANNOUNCING THE DECEASE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

19 DECEMBER, 1799.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

The letter herewith transmitted will inform you that it has pleased Divine Providence to remove from this life our excellent fellow-citizen, George Washington, by the purity of his character and a long series of services to his country, rendered illustrious through the world. It remains for an affectionate and grateful people, in whose hearts he can never die, to pay suitable honors to his memory.

JOHN ADAMS.

Mount Vernon, 15 December, 1799.

SIR, — It is with inexpressible grief that I have to announce to you the death of the great and good General Washington. He died last evening, between ten and eleven o'clock, after a short illness of about twenty hours. His disorder was an inflammatory sore throat, which proceeded from a cold, of which he made but little complaint on Friday. On Saturday morning, about three o'clock, he became ill. Doctor Craik attended him in the morning, and Doctor Dick, of Alexandria, and Doctor Brown, of Port Tobacco, were soon after called in. Every medical assistance was offered, but without the desired effect. His last scene corresponded with the whole tenor of his life; not a groan, nor a complaint escaped him in extreme distress.

With perfect resignation, and in full possession of his reason, he closed his well-spent life.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant.

TOBIAS LEAR.

MESSAGE TO BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS;

TRANSMITTING A LETTER OF MARTHA WASHINGTON.

6 JANUARY, 1800.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE, AND
GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

In compliance with the request in one of the resolutions of Congress, of the 21st of December last, I transmitted a copy of those resolutions by my Secretary, Mr. Shaw, to Mrs. Washington, assuring her of the profound respect Congress will ever bear to her person and character, of their condolence in the late afflicting dispensation of Providence, and entreating her assent to the interment of the remains of General George Washington, in the manner expressed in the first resolution. As the sentiments of that virtuous lady, not less beloved by this nation than she is at present greatly afflicted, can never be so well expressed as in her own words, I transmit to Congress her original letter.

It would be an attempt of too much delicacy to make any comments upon it; but there can be no doubt that the nation at large, as well as all the branches of the government, will be highly gratified by any arrangement which may diminish the sacrifice she makes of her individual feelings.

JOHN ADAMS.

Mount Vernon, 31 December, 1799.

SIR, — While I feel with keenest anguish the late dispensation of Divine Providence, I cannot be insensible to the mournful tributes of respect and veneration, which are paid to the memory of my dear deceased husband; and as his best services and most anxious wishes were always devoted to the welfare

and happiness of his country, to know that they were truly appreciated and gratefully remembered, affords no inconsiderable consolation.

Taught by that great example which I have so long had before me, never to oppose my private wishes to the public will, I must consent to the request made by Congress, which you have had the goodness to transmit to me; and in doing this I need not, I cannot say what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of public duty.

With grateful acknowledgments and unfeigned thanks for the personal respect and evidences of condolence expressed by Congress and yourself, I remain very respectfully, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

MARTHA WASHINGTON.

MESSAGE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

TRANSMITTING A LETTER OF JOHN RANDOLPH, JR.

14 JANUARY, 1800.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

As the inclosed letter from a member of your House, received by me in the night of Saturday, the 11th instant, relates to the privileges of the House, which, in my opinion, ought to be inquired into in the House itself, if any where, I have thought proper to submit the whole letter and its tendencies to your consideration, without any other comments on its matter or style. But as no gross impropriety of conduct, on the part of persons holding commissions in the army or navy of the United States, ought to pass without due animadversion, I have directed the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy to investigate the conduct complained of, and to report to me, without delay, such a statement of facts as will enable me to decide on the course which duty and justice shall appear to prescribe.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

TRANSMITTING A REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

21 JANUARY, 1801.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

In compliance with your request, signified in your resolution of the twentieth day of this month, I transmit you a report, made to me by the Secretary of State on the same day, a letter of our late envoys to him of the 4th of October last, an extract of a letter from our minister plenipotentiary in London to him, of the 22d of November last, and an extract of another letter from the minister to the secretary of the 31st of October last.

The reasoning in the letter of our late envoys to France is so fully supported by the writers on the law of nations, particularly by Vattel, as well as by his great masters, Grotius and Pufendorf, that nothing is left to be desired to settle the point, that if there be a collision between two treaties, made with two different powers, the more ancient has the advantage; for no engagement contrary to it can be entered into in the treaty afterwards made; and if this last be found, in any case, incompatible with the more ancient one, its execution is considered as impossible, because the person promising had not the power of acting contrary to his antecedent engagement. Although our right is very clear to negotiate treaties according to our own ideas of right and justice, honor and good faith, yet it must always be a satisfaction to know that the judgment of other nations, with whom we have connection, coincides with ours, and that we have no reason to apprehend that any disagreeable questions and discussions are likely to arise. The letters from Mr. King will, therefore, be read by the Senate with particular satisfaction.

The inconveniences to public officers, and the mischiefs to the public, arising from the publication of the despatches of ministers abroad, are so numerous and so obvious, that I request of the Senate that these papers, especially the letters from Mr. King, be considered in close confidence.

JOHN ADAMS.

MESSAGE TO THE SENATE;

ON THE CONVENTION WITH FRANCE.

2 MARCH, 1801.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

I have considered the advice and consent of the Senate to the ratification of the convention with France, under certain conditions. Although it would have been more conformable to my own judgment and inclination to have agreed to that instrument unconditionally, yet, as in this point I found I had the misfortune to differ in opinion from so high a constitutional authority as the Senate, I judged it more consistent with the honor and interest of the United States to ratify it under the conditions prescribed, than not at all. I accordingly nominated Mr. Bayard, minister plenipotentiary to the French republic, that he might proceed without delay to Paris to negotiate the exchange of ratifications; but as that gentleman has declined his appointment for reasons equally applicable to every other person suitable for the service, I shall take no further measures relative to this business, and leave the convention with all the documents in the office of State, that my successor may proceed with them according to his wisdom.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATIONS.

PROCLAMATION[1]

FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF CONGRESS.

25 MARCH, 1797.

Whereas the Constitution of the United States of America provides that the President may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses of Congress; and whereas an extraordinary occasion exists for convening Congress, and divers great and weighty matters claim their consideration, I have therefore thought it necessary to convene, and I do by these presents convene the Congress of the United States of America, at the city of Philadelphia, in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, on Monday, the fifteenth day of May next, hereby requiring the senators and representatives in the Congress of the United States of America, and every of them, that, laying aside all other matters and cares, they then and there meet and assemble in Congress, in order to consult and determine on such measures as in their wisdom shall be deemed meet for the safety and welfare of the said United States.

In testimony whereof, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

[1] Such of the proclamations have been selected as are connected with the extraordinary measures of this administration. With regard to the mode of arranging this portion of the work, nothing can be added to the rules laid down in Sparks's *Washington*; Introduction to the fifth part. vol. xii. p. vii.

PROCLAMATION

FOR A NATIONAL FAST.

23 MARCH, 1798.

As the safety and prosperity of nations ultimately and essentially depend on the protection and blessing of Almighty God; and the national acknowledgment of this truth is not only an indispensable duty, which the people owe to him, but a duty whose natural influence is favorable to the promotion of that morality and piety, without which social happiness cannot exist, nor the blessings of a free government be enjoyed; and as this duty, at all times incumbent, is so especially in seasons of difficulty and of danger, when existing or threatening calamities, the just judgments of God against prevalent iniquity, are a loud call to repentance and reformation; and as the United States of America are at ~~present placed~~ in a ~~hazardous~~ and ~~afflictive~~ situation, by the unfriendly disposition, conduct, and demands of a foreign power, evinced by repeated refusals to receive our messengers of reconciliation and peace, by depredations on our commerce, and the infliction of injuries on very many of our fellow-citizens, while engaged in their lawful business on the seas; — under these considerations, it has appeared to me that the duty of imploring the mercy and benediction of Heaven on our country, demands at this time a special attention from its inhabitants.

I have therefore thought fit to recommend, and I do hereby recommend, that Wednesday, the 9th day of May next, be observed throughout the United States, as a day of solemn humiliation, fasting and prayer; that the citizens of these States, abstaining on that day from their customary worldly occupations, offer their devout addresses to the Father of mercies, agreeably to those forms or methods which they have severally adopted as the most suitable and becoming; that all religious congregations do, with the deepest humility, acknowledge before God the manifold sins and transgressions with which we are justly chargeable as individuals and as a nation; beseeching him at the same time, of his infinite grace, through the Redeemer of the world, freely to remit all our offences, and to incline us,

by his Holy Spirit, to that sincere repentance and reformation which may afford us reason to hope for his inestimable favor and heavenly benediction; that it be made the subject of particular and earnest supplication, that our country may be protected from all the dangers which threaten it, that our civil and religious privileges may be preserved inviolate, and perpetuated to the latest generations, that our public councils and magistrates may be especially enlightened and directed at this critical period, that the American people may be united in those bonds of amity and mutual confidence, and inspired with that vigor and fortitude by which they have in times past been so highly distinguished, and by which they have obtained such invaluable advantages, that the health of the inhabitants of our land may be preserved, and their agriculture, commerce, fisheries, arts, and manufactures, be blessed and prospered, that the principles of genuine piety and sound morality may influence the minds and govern the lives of every description of our citizens, and that the blessings of peace, freedom, and pure religion, may be speedily extended to all the nations of the earth.

And finally I recommend, that on the said day, the duties of humiliation and prayer be accompanied by fervent thanksgiving to the bestower of every good gift, not only for having hitherto protected and preserved the people of these United States in the independent enjoyment of their religious and civil freedom, but also for having prospered them in a wonderful progress of population, and for conferring on them many and great favors conducive to the happiness and prosperity of a nation.

Given, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION

REVOKING THE EXEQUATURS OF THE FRENCH CONSULS.

13 JULY, 1798.

The citizen Joseph Philippe Letombe having heretofore produced to the President of the United States his commission as consul-general of the French republic, within the United States of America, and another commission as consul of the

French republic at Philadelphia; and, in like manner, the citizen Rosier having produced his commission as vice-consul of the French republic at New York; and the citizen Arcambal having produced his commission as vice-consul of the French republic at Newport; and citizen Theodore Charles Mozard having produced his commission as consul of the French republic within the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island; and the President of the United States having thereupon granted an *exequatur* to each of the French citizens above named, recognizing them in their respective consular offices above mentioned, and declaring them respectively free to exercise and enjoy such functions, powers, and privileges as are allowed to a consul-general, consuls, and vice-consuls of the French republic, by their treaties, conventions, and laws in that case made and provided; — and the Congress of the United States, by their act, passed the seventh day of July, 1798, having declared, "That the United States are of right freed and exonerated from the stipulations of the treaties, and of the consular convention heretofore concluded between the United States and France; and that the same shall not henceforth be regarded as legally obligatory on the government or citizens of the United States," and by a former act, passed the 13th day of May, 1798, the Congress of the United States having "suspended the commercial intercourse between the United States and France, and the dependencies thereof," which commercial intercourse was the direct and chief object of the consular establishment;

And whereas actual hostilities have long been practised on the commerce of the United States by the cruisers of the French republic under the orders of its government, which orders that government refuses to revoke or relax; and hence it has become improper any longer to allow the consul-general, consuls, and vice-consuls of the French republic, above named, or any of its consular persons or agents heretofore admitted in these United States, any longer to exercise their consular functions; — these are therefore to declare, that I do no longer recognize the said citizen Letombe as consul-general, or consul, nor the said citizens Rosier and Arcambal as vice-consuls, nor the said citizen Mozard as consul of the French republic, in any part of these United States, nor permit them or any other consular

persons or agents of the French republic, heretofore admitted in the United States, to exercise their functions as such; and I do hereby wholly revoke the *exequaturs* heretofore given to them respectively, and do declare them absolutely null and void, from this day forward.

In testimony whereof, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION

FOR A NATIONAL FAST.

6 MARCH, 1799.

As no truth is more clearly taught in the volume of inspiration, nor any more fully demonstrated by the experience of all ages, than that a deep sense and a due acknowledgment of the governing providence of a Supreme Being, and of the accountableness of men to Him as the searcher of hearts and righteous distributor of rewards and punishments, are conducive equally to the happiness and rectitude of individuals, and to the well-being of communities; as it is, also, most reasonable in itself, that men who are made capable of social acts and relations, who owe their improvements to the social state, and who derive their enjoyments from it, should, as a society, make their acknowledgments of dependence and obligation to Him, who hath endowed them with these capacities, and elevated them in the scale of existence by these distinctions; as it is, likewise, a plain dictate of duty, and a strong sentiment of nature, that in circumstances of great urgency and seasons of imminent danger, earnest and particular supplications should be made to Him who is able to defend or to destroy; as, moreover, the most precious interests of the people of the United States are still held in jeopardy by the hostile designs and insidious acts of a foreign nation, as well as by the dissemination among them of those principles, subversive of the foundations of all religious, moral, and social obligations, that have produced incalculable mischief and misery in other countries; and as, in fine, the observance of special seasons for public religious solemnities,

is happily calculated to avert the evils which we ought to deprecate, and to excite to the performance of the duties which we ought to discharge, by calling and fixing the attention of the people at large to the momentous truths already recited, by affording opportunity to teach and inculcate them, by animating devotion, and giving to it the character of a national act:

For these reasons I have thought proper to recommend, and I do hereby recommend accordingly, that Thursday, the twenty-fifth day of April next, be observed, throughout the United States of America, as a day of solemn humiliation, fasting, and prayer; that the citizens, on that day, abstain as far as may be from their secular occupations, devote the time to the sacred duties of religion, in public and in private; that they call to mind our numerous offences against the most high God, confess them before him with the sincerest penitence, implore his pardoning mercy, through the Great Mediator and Redeemer, for our past transgressions, and that, through the grace of his Holy Spirit, we may be disposed and enabled to yield a more suitable obedience to his righteous requisitions in time to come; that he would interpose to arrest the progress of that impiety and licentiousness in principle and practice, so offensive to himself and so ruinous to mankind; that he would make us deeply sensible, that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but that sin is the reproach of any people"; that he would turn us from our transgressions, and turn his displeasure from us; that he would withhold us from unreasonable discontent, from disunion, faction, sedition, and insurrection; that he would preserve our country from the desolating sword; that he would save our cities and towns from a repetition of those awful pestilential visitations under which they have lately suffered so severely, and that the health of our inhabitants, generally, may be precious in his sight; that he would favor us with fruitful seasons, and so bless the labors of the husbandman as that there may be food in abundance for man and beast; that he would prosper our commerce, manufactures, and fisheries, and give success to the people in all their lawful industry and enterprise; that he would smile on our colleges, academies, schools, and seminaries of learning, and make them nurseries of sound science, morals, and religion; that he would bless all magistrates from the highest to the lowest, give them the true spirit of their station,

make them a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well; that he would preside over the councils of the nation at this critical period, enlighten them to a just discernment of the public interest, and save them from mistake, division, and discord; that he would make succeed our preparations for defence, and bless our armaments by land and by sea; that he would put an end to the effusion of human blood and the accumulation of human misery among the contending nations of the earth, by disposing them to justice, to equity, to benevolence, and to peace; and that he would extend the blessings of knowledge, of true liberty, and of pure and undefiled religion, throughout the world.

And I do, also, recommend that, with these acts of humiliation, penitence, and prayer, fervent thanksgiving to the author of all good be united, for the countless favors which he is still continuing to the people of the United States, and which render their condition as a nation eminently happy, when compared with the lot of others.

Given, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION

CONCERNING THE INSURRECTION IN PENNSYLVANIA.

12 MARCH, 1799.

Whereas, combinations to defeat the execution of the law for the valuation of lands and dwelling-houses within the United States, have existed in the counties of Northampton, Montgomery, and Bucks, in the State of Pennsylvania, and have proceeded in a manner subversive of the just authority of the government, by misrepresentations to render the laws odious, by deterring the officers of the United States to forbear the execution of their functions, and by openly threatening their lives: And whereas, the endeavors of the well-affected citizens, as well as of the executive officers, to conciliate a compliance with those laws, have failed of success, and certain persons in the county of Northampton, aforesaid, have been hardy enough to perpetrate certain acts, which, I am advised, amount to

treason, being overt acts of levying war against the United States, the said persons, exceeding one hundred in number, and, armed and arrayed in a warlike manner, having, on the seventh day of the present month of March, proceeded to the house of Abraham Lovering, in the town of Bethlehem, and there compelled William Nicholas, Marshal of the United States, and for the district of Pennsylvania, to desist from the execution of certain legal processes in his hands to be executed, and having compelled him to discharge and set at liberty certain persons whom he had arrested by virtue of a criminal process, duly issued for offences against the United States, and having impeded and prevented the commissioners and assessors, in conformity with the laws aforesaid, in the county of Northampton aforesaid, by threats of personal injury, from executing the said laws, avowing as the motive of these illegal and treasonable proceedings an intention to prevent, by force of arms, the execution of the said laws, and to withstand by open violence the lawful authority of the government of the United States. And whereas, by the Constitution and laws of the United States, I am authorized, whenever the laws of the United States shall be opposed, or the execution thereof obstructed, in any State, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings or by powers vested in the marshal, to call forth military force to suppress such combinations, and to cause the laws to be duly executed; and I have accordingly determined so to do, under the solemn conviction that the essential interests of the United States demand it. Wherefore I, John Adams, President of the United States, do hereby command all persons being insurgents as aforesaid, and all others whom it may concern, on or before Monday next, being the eighteenth day of this present month, to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes. And I do, moreover, warn all persons whomsoever, against aiding, abetting, or comforting the perpetrators of the aforesaid treasonable acts, and I do require all officers and others, good and faithful citizens, according to their respective duties and the laws of the land, to exert their utmost endeavors to prevent and suppress such dangerous and unlawful proceedings.

In testimony whereof, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION,

OPENING THE TRADE WITH CERTAIN PORTS OF ST. DOMINGO.

26 JUNE, 1799.

Whereas, by an act of the Congress of the United States, passed the 9th day of February last, entitled "An act further to suspend the commercial intercourse between the United States and France, and the dependencies thereof," it is provided, that at any time after the passing of this act, it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, if he shall deem it expedient and consistent with the interest of the United States, by his order, to remit and discontinue for the time being the restraints and prohibitions by the said act imposed, either with respect to the French republic, or to any island, port, or place, belonging to the said republic, with which a commercial intercourse may safely be renewed; and also to revoke such order, whenever in his opinion the interest of the United States shall require; and he is authorized to make proclamation thereof accordingly;

And whereas the arrangements which have been made at St. Domingo for the safety of the commerce of the United States, and for the admission of American vessels into certain ports of that island, do, in my opinion render it expedient and for the interest of the United States to renew a commercial intercourse with such ports;

Therefore I, John Adams, President of the United States, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the above recited act, do hereby remit and discontinue the restraints and prohibitions therein contained, within the limits and under the regulations here following, to wit:

1. It shall be lawful for vessels which have departed or may depart from the United States, to enter the ports of Cape François and Port Republicain, formerly called Port-au-Prince, in the said island of St. Domingo, on and after the first day of August next.[1]

2. No vessel shall be cleared for any other port in St. Domingo than Cape François and Port Republicain.

[1] A mistake was made here by the Secretary of State. The first of August was the date of departure from the United States. See vol. viii. p. 661, note.

3. It shall be lawful for vessels which shall enter the said ports of Cape François and Port Republicain, after the thirty-first day of July next, to depart from thence to any port in said island between Monte Christi on the north and Petit Goave on the west; provided it be done with the consent of the government of St. Domingo, and pursuant to certificates or passports expressing such consent, signed by the consul-general of the United States, or consul residing at the port of departure.

4. All vessels sailing in contravention of these regulations will be out of the protection of the United States, and be moreover liable to capture, seizure, and confiscation.

Given under, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION,

OPENING THE TRADE WITH OTHER PORTS OF ST. DOMINGO.

9 MAY, 1800.

Whereas, by an act of Congress of the United States, passed the 27th day of February last, entitled "An act further to suspend the commercial intercourse between the United States and France and the dependencies thereof," it is enacted, That, any time after the passing of the said act, it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, by his order, to remit and discontinue for the time being, whenever he shall deem it expedient and for the interest of the United States, all or any of the restraints and prohibitions imposed by the said act, in respect to the territories of the French republic, or to any island, port, or place, belonging to the said republic, with which, in his opinion, a commercial intercourse may be safely renewed; and to make proclamation thereof accordingly; and it is also thereby further enacted, That the whole of the island of Hispaniola shall, for the purposes of the said act, be considered as a dependence of the French republic. And whereas the circumstances of certain ports and places of the said island not comprised in the proclamation of the 26th day of June, 1799, are such that I deem it expedient, and for the interest of the United States, to remit and discontinue the restraints and prohibitions imposed by the

said act, in respect to those ports and places, in order that a commercial intercourse with the same may be renewed;—

Therefore I, John Adams, President of the United States, by virtue of the powers vested in me as aforesaid, do hereby remit and discontinue the restraints and prohibitions imposed by the act aforesaid, in respect to all the ports and places in the said island of Hispaniola, from Monte Christi on the north, round by the eastern end thereof, as far as the port of Jacmel, on the south, inclusively. And it shall henceforth be lawful for vessels of the United States to enter and trade at any of the said ports and places, provided it be done with the consent of the government of St. Domingo. And for this purpose it is hereby required that such vessels first enter the port of Cape François or Port Republicain, in the said island, and there obtain the passports of the said government, which shall also be signed by the consul-general or consul of the United States residing at Cape François or Port Republicain, permitting such vessel to go thence to the other ports and places of the said island herein before mentioned and described. Of all which the collectors of the customs and all other officers and citizens of the United States are to take due notice, and govern themselves.

In testimony, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

PROCLAMATION,

GRANTING PARDON TO THE PENNSYLVANIA INSURGENTS.

21 MAY, 1800.

Whereas, the late wicked and treasonable insurrection against the just authority of the United States, of sundry persons in the counties of Northampton, Montgomery, and Bucks, in the State of Pennsylvania, in the year 1799, having been speedily suppressed, without any of the calamities usually attending rebellion; whereupon peace, order, and submission to the laws of the United States were restored in the aforesaid counties, and the ignorant, misguided, and misinformed in the counties, have returned to a proper sense of their duty; whereby it is become unnecessary for the public good that any future prosecutions

should be commenced or carried on against any person or persons, by reason of their being concerned in the said insurrection: — wherefore be it known, that I, John Adams, President of the United States of America, have granted, and by these presents do grant, a full, free, and absolute pardon, to all and every person or persons concerned in the said insurrection, excepting as hereinafter excepted, of all treasons, misprisions of treason, felonies, misdemeanors, and other crimes by them respectively done or committed against the United States, in either of the said counties, before the twelfth day of March in the year 1799; excepting and excluding therefrom every person who now standeth indicted or convicted of any treason, misprision of treason, or other offence against the United States; whereby remedying and releasing unto all persons, except as before excepted, all pains and penalties incurred or supposed to be incurred for or on account of the premises.

Given, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

ADDRESSES.

The number of addresses made to the President during the excitement occasioned by the apprehension of a war with France, was very great. They now fill a large box, many of them having long rolls of signatures attached. A portion of them, with the answers, were collected and published at Boston in a volume dedicated to the French Directory, in 1798. Of course, it is not possible to embrace in this work more than those answers which, for some particular reason, appear deserving to be included. In some of these cases it has not been possible to find the exact date of their composition.

TO THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

23 AUGUST, 1797.

GENTLEMEN,

Meeting with you at a regular period established by law, I expected nothing more than those habitual expressions of your friendship, which I have constantly received as one of your associates, upon all such occasions.[1] This elegant address, therefore, as it was not foreseen, is the more acceptable. Coming from gentlemen whose fame for science and literature, as well as for every civil and political virtue, is not confined to a single State, nor to one quarter of the world, it does me great honor. Your congratulations on my election to the office of first magistrate, in a nation where the rights of men are respected and truly supported, deserve my best thanks.

The commands of the public have obliged me to reside in foreign countries and distant States for almost the whole period of the existence of our academy; but no part of my time has ever been spent with more real satisfaction to myself than the

[1] Mr. Adams was the President of the Academy.

few hours, which the course of events has permitted me to pass in your society.

Your exertions at home and extensive correspondences abroad are every day adding to the knowledge of our country, and its improvement in useful arts; and I have only to regret that indispensable avocations have prevented me from assisting in your labors and endeavoring to share in the glory of your success.

The unanimity with which the members of this academy, as well as of the university at Cambridge, and the whole body of the clergy of this commonwealth, (all so happily connected together,) are attached to the union of our American States, their constitutions of government, and the federal administration, is the happiest omen of the future peace, liberty, safety, and prosperity of our country. The rising generation of Americans, the most promising and perhaps the most important youth which the human species can boast, educated in such principles and under such examples, cannot fail to answer the high expectations which the world has formed of their future wisdom, virtues, and energies.

To succeed in the administration of the government of the United States, after a citizen, whose great talents, indefatigable exertions, and disinterested patriotism had carried the gratitude of his country and the applause of the world to the highest pitch, was indeed an arduous enterprise. It was not without much diffidence, and many anxious apprehensions that I engaged in the service. But it has been with inexpressible gratitude and pleasure that I have everywhere found, in my fellow-citizens, an almost universal disposition to alleviate the burden as much as possible, by the cheerful and generous support of their affectionate countenance and cordial approbation. Nothing of the kind has more tenderly touched me, than the explicit sanction you have been pleased to express of the measures I have hitherto adopted.

Permit me, gentlemen, to join in your fervent prayers, that the incomprehensible Source of light and of power may direct us all, and crown with success all our efforts to promote the welfare of our country and the happiness of mankind.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN, AND CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

APRIL, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Never, as I can recollect, were any class of my fellow-citizens more welcome to me, on any occasion, than the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the city of Philadelphia upon this.

At a time, when all the old republics of Europe are crumbling into dust, and others forming, whose destinies are dubious; when the monarchies of the old world are some of them fallen, and others trembling to their foundations; when our own infant republic has scarcely had time to cement its strength or decide its own practicable form; when these agitations of the human species have affected our people and produced a spirit of party, which scruples not to go all lengths of profligacy, falsehood, and malignity, in defaming our government; your approbation and confidence are to me a great consolation. Under your immediate observation and inspection, the principal operations of the government are directed, and to you, both characters and conduct must be intimately known.

I am but one of the American people, and my fate and fortune must be decided with theirs. As far as the forces of nature may remain to me, I will not be wanting in my duties to them, nor will I harbor a suspicion that they will fail to afford me all necessary aid and support.

While, with the greatest pleasure, I reciprocate your congratulations on the prospect of unanimity that now presents itself to the hopes of every American, and on that spirit of patriotism and independence that is rising into active exertion, in opposition to seduction, domination, and rapine, I offer a sincere prayer that the citizens of Philadelphia may persevere in the virtuous course and maintain the honorable character of their ancestors, and be protected from every calamity, physical, moral, and political.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CITIZENS OF PHILADELPHIA, THE DISTRICT OF SOUTHWARK, AND THE NORTHERN LIBERTIES.

26 APRIL, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Many of the nations of the earth, disgusted with their present governments, seem determined to dissolve them, without knowing what other forms to substitute in their places. And ignorance, with all the cruel intolerance of the most bloody superstitions that ever have existed, is imposing its absurd dogmas by the sword, without the smallest attention to that emulation universal in the human heart, which is a great spring of generous action, when wisely regulated, but the never-failing source of anarchy and tyranny, when uncontrolled by the Constitution of the State. As the United States are a part of the society of mankind, and are closely connected with several nations now struggling in arms, the present period is indeed pregnant with events of the highest importance to their happiness and safety.

In such a state of things your implicit approbation of the general system, and the particular measures of the government, your generous feelings of resentment at the wrongs and offences committed against it, and at the menaces of others still more intolerable, your candid acknowledgment of the blessings you enjoy under its free and equal Constitution, your determination at every hazard to maintain your freedom and independence, and to support the measures which may be thought necessary to support the Constitution, freedom, and independence of the United States, do you great honor as patriots and citizens; and your communication of these spirited sentiments to me deserves my best thanks.

JOHN ADAMS

TO THE INHABITANTS OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

30 APRIL, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

The respectful address from the inhabitants of Providence, who have been my friends and neighbors from my youth, was by no means necessary to convince me of their affectionate attachment.

Imagination can scarcely conceive a stronger contrast than has lately been disclosed between the views of France and those of the United States. I will not distinguish between the views of the government and those of the nations; if in France they are different, the nation, whose right it is, will soon show they are so; if in America they are the same, this fact also will be shown by the nation in a short time in a strong light. I cannot, however, see in this contrast a sufficient cause of disquieting apprehensions of hostilities from that republic. Hostilities have already come thick upon us by surprise from that quarter. If others are coming, we shall be better prepared to meet and repel them.

When we were the first to acknowledge the legitimate origin of the French republic, we discovered at least as much zeal, sincerity, and honesty of heart, as we did of knowledge of the subject, or foresight of its consequences. The ill success of those proofs which the United States have given of their sincere desire to preserve an impartial neutrality, and of their repeated negotiations for redress of wrongs, have demonstrated that other means must be resorted to in order to obtain it.

I agree entirely with you in acquitting in general those of our citizens who have too much attached themselves to European politics, of any treacherous defection from the cause of their country. The French revolution was a spectacle so novel, and the cause was so complicated, that I have ever acknowledged myself incompetent to judge of it, as it concerned the happiness of France, or operated on that of mankind. My countrymen in general were, I believe, as ill qualified as myself to decide; the French nation alone had the right and the capacity, and to them it should have been resigned. We should have suspended

our judgments, and been as neutral and impartial between the parties in France as between the nations of Europe.

The honor of our nation is now universally seen to be at stake, and its independence in question, and all America appears to declare, with one heart and one voice, a manly determination to vindicate both.

The legislature, by the late publication of instructions and despatches, have appealed to the world; and if the iron hand of power has not locked up the presses of Europe in such a manner that the facts cannot be communicated to mankind, the impartial sense and the voice of human nature must be in our favor. If perseverance in injustice should necessitate the last appeal, whatever causes we may have to humble ourselves before the supreme tribunal, we have none for any other sentiment than the pride of virtue and honest indignation against the late conduct of France towards us.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your personal civilities to me, and return your kind wishes for my happiness.

Your noble declaration of your readiness, with your lives and fortunes, to support the dignity and independence of the United States, will receive the applause of your country, and of all who have the sentiments and feelings of men.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF BRIDGETON, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

1 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

To you, who disapprove of addresses of compliment in general, and of the interposition of constituents in the ordinary course of national affairs, my thanks are more particularly due for the part you have taken at this extraordinary crisis.

In preparing the project of a treaty to be proposed by Congress to France, in the year 1776, fully apprised of the importance of neutrality, I prescribed to myself as a rule to admit nothing which could compromise the United States in any

future wars of Europe. In the negotiations of peace in 1782, I saw stronger reasons than ever before in favor of that maxim.

The wise and prudent measures adopted by my predecessor, to preserve and support a fair and impartial neutrality with the belligerent powers of Europe, coinciding with my own opinions and principles, more ancient than the birth of the United States, could not but be heartily approved and supported by me during his whole administration, and steadily pursued until this time. It was, however, no part of the system of my predecessor, nor is it any article of my creed, that neutrality should be purchased with bribes, by the sacrifice of our sovereignty and the abandonment of our independence, by the surrender of our moral character, by tarnishing our honor, by violations of public faith, or by any means humiliating to our own national pride, or disgraceful in the eyes of the world; nor will I be the instrument of procuring it on such terms.

I thank you, gentlemen, for your candid approbation and your noble assurances of support.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CITIZENS OF BALTIMORE AND BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND.

2 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for communicating to me this respectful address.

The sense you entertain of the conduct of a foreign nation, in threatening with destruction the freedom and independence of the United States, and representing the citizens of America as a divided people, is such as patriotism naturally and necessarily inspires. The fate of every republic in Europe, however, from Poland to Geneva, has given too much cause for such thoughts and projects in our enemies, and such apprehensions in our friends and ourselves.

Republics are always divided in opinion, concerning forms of governments, and plans and details of administration. These divisions are generally harmless, often salutary, and seldom very hurtful, except when foreign nations interfere, and by their

arts and agents excite and ferment them into parties and factions. Such interference and influence must be resisted and exterminated, or it will end in America, as it did anciently in Greece, and in our own time in Europe, in our total destruction as a republican government and independent power.

The liberal applause you bestow on the measures pursued by the government for the adjustment of differences and restoration of harmony, your resolutions of resistance in preference to submission to any foreign power, your confidence in the government, your recommendation of measures of defence of the country and protection of its commerce, and your generous resolution to submit to the expenses and temporary inconveniences which may be necessary to preserve the sovereignty and freedom of the United States, are received with much respect.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE YOUNG MEN OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, THE DISTRICT OF SOUTHWARK, AND THE NORTHERN LIBERTIES, PENNSYLVANIA.

7 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Nothing of the kind could be more welcome to me than this address from the ingenuous youth of Philadelphia, in their virtuous anxiety to preserve the honor and independence of their country.

For a long course of years, my amiable young friends, before the birth of the oldest of you, I was called to act with your fathers in concerting measures the most disagreeable and dangerous, not from a desire of innovation, not from discontent with the government under which we were born and bred, but to preserve the honor of our country, and vindicate the immemorial liberties of our ancestors. In pursuit of these measures, it became, not an object of predilection and choice, but of indispensable necessity to assert our independence, which, with many difficulties and much suffering, was at length secured. I have long flattered myself that I might be gathered to the ashes of

my fathers, leaving unimpaired and unassailed the liberties so dearly purchased; and that I should never be summoned a second time to act in such scenes of anxiety, perplexity, and danger, as war of any kind always exhibits. If my good fortune should not correspond with my earnest wishes, and I should be obliged to act with you, as with your ancestors, in defence of the honor and independence of our country, I sincerely wish that none of you may ever have your constancy of mind and strength of body put to so severe a trial, as to be compelled again in your advanced age to the contemplation and near prospect of any war of offence or defence.

It would neither be consistent with my character, nor yours, on this occasion, to read lessons to gentlemen of your education, conduct, and character; if, however, I might be indulged the privilege of a father, I should with the tenderest affection recommend to your serious and constant consideration, that science and morals are the great pillars on which this country has been raised to its present population, opulence, and prosperity, and that these alone can advance, support, and preserve it.

Without wishing to damp the ardor of curiosity, or influence the freedom of inquiry, I will hazard a prediction, that, after the most industrious and impartial researches, the longest liver of you all will find no principles, institutions, or systems of education more fit, in general, to be transmitted to your posterity, than those you have received from your ancestors.

No prospect or spectacle could excite a stronger sensibility in my bosom than this, which now presents itself before me. I wish you all the pure joys, the sanguine hopes, and bright prospects, which are decent at your age, and that your lives may be long, honorable, and prosperous, in the constant practice of benevolence to men and reverence to the Divinity, in a country persevering in liberty, and increasing in virtue, power, and glory.

The sentiments of this address, everywhere expressed in language as chaste and modest as it is elegant and masterly, which would do honor to the youth of any country, have raised a monument to your fame more durable than brass and marble. The youth of all America must exult in this early sample, at the seat of government, of their talents, genius, and virtues.

America and the world will look to our youth as one of our firmest bulwarks. The generous claim which you now present,

of sharing in the difficulty, danger, and glory of our defence, is to me and to your country a sure and pleasing pledge, that your birth-rights will never be ignobly bartered or surrendered; but that you will in your turn transmit to future generations the fair inheritance obtained by the unconquerable spirit of your fathers.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS AND CITIZENS OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

7 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for the declaration of your approbation of the measures adopted by me, relative to our foreign relations, to conciliate the French republic and to accommodate all existing difference upon terms compatible with the safety, the interest, and the dignity of the United States.

Your high and elevated opinion of, and confidence in, the virtue, wisdom, and patriotism of the national government, and fixed resolution to support, at the risk of your lives and fortunes, such measures as may be determined to be necessary to promote and secure the honor and happiness of the United States, do you honor, and are perfectly in character.

It must, however, be a very unnatural and peculiar state of things to make it necessary or proper in you, or any other American in your behalf, to declare to the world, what the world ought to have known and acknowledged without hesitation, that you are not humiliated under a colonial sense of fear, that you are not a divided people in any point which involves the honor, safety, and essential rights of your country, that you know your rights, and are determined to support them.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA.

8 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

This respectful and affectionate address from the wealthy, industrious, and independent proprietors of the county of Lancaster, is as honorable as it is agreeable to me, and is returned with my hearty thanks.

The attention you have given to a demand of a preliminary submission, acknowledging the commission of offence, requires an observation on my part. The Constitution of the United States makes it my duty to communicate to Congress from time to time information of the state of the Union, and to recommend to their consideration measures which appear to me necessary or expedient. While in discharge of this duty, I submit, with entire resignation, to the responsibility established in the Constitution, I hold myself accountable to no crowned head or Executive Directory, or other foreign power on earth, for the communications which my duty obliges me to make; yet to you, my fellow-citizens, I will freely say, that in the case alluded to, the honor done, the publicity and solemnity given to the audience of leave to a disgraced minister, recalled in displeasure for misconduct, was a studied insult to the government of my country.

The observations made by me were mild and moderate in a degree far beyond what the provocation would have justified; and if the American people or their government could have borne it without resentment, offered as it was in the face of all all the world, they must have been fit to be the tributary dupes they have since been so coolly invited to become.

As I know not where a better choice of envoys could have been made, I thank you for your approbation of their appointment and applause of their conduct.

In return for your prayers for my health and fortitude, I offer mine for the citizens of Lancaster in particular and the United States in general.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTY OF BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY.

8 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

There is nothing in the conduct of our enemies more remarkable than their total contempt of the people, while they pretend to do all for the people; and of all real republican governments, while they screen themselves under some of their names and forms. While they are erecting military despotisms, under the delusive names of representative democracies, they are demolishing the Pope by the most machiavelian maxim of one of his predecessors, "If the good people will be deceived, let *him* be deceived."

The American people are unquestionably the best qualified of any great nation in the world, by their character, habits, and all other circumstances, for a real republican government; yet the American people are represented as in opposition, in enmity, and on the point of hostility against the government of their own institution and the administration of their own choice. If this were true, what would be the consequence? Nothing more nor less than that they are ripe for a military despotism, under the domination of a foreign power. It is to me no wonder that American blood boils at these ideas.

Your ardent attachment to the Constitution and government of the United States, and complete confidence in all its departments; your firm resolution, at every hazard, to maintain, support, and defend with your lives and fortunes every measure, which by your lawful representatives may be deemed necessary to protect the rights, liberty, and independence of the United States of America, will do you honor with all the world and with all posterity.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.

10 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Although the sentiments and conduct of the people of Connecticut, as expressed upon all occasions by themselves at home, and their representatives in both houses of Congress, have been so unanimous and uniform in support of the government as to render their interposition at this crisis unnecessary, yet this address from the citizens of Hartford is not the less agreeable to me, or deserving my gratitude.

I have never considered the issue of our late endeavors to negotiate with the French republic as a subject either of congratulation or despondency; as, on the one hand, I should be happy in the friendship of France upon honorable conditions, under any government she may choose to assume; so, on the other, I see no cause of despondency under a continuance of her enmity, if such is her determined disposition. Providence may indeed intend us a favor above our wishes and a blessing beyond our foresight in the extinction of an influence which might soon have become more fatal than war.

If the designs of foreign hostility and the views of domestic treachery are now fully disclosed; if the moderation, dignity, and wisdom of government have awed into silence the clamors of faction, and palsied the thousand tongues of calumny; if the spirit of independent freemen is again awakened, and its force is combined, I agree with you that it will be irresistible.

I hesitate not to express a confidence equal to yours in the collected firmness and wisdom which the Southern States have ever displayed on the approach of danger; nor can I doubt that they will join with all their fellow-citizens, with equal spirit, to crush every attempt at disorganization, disunion, and anarchy. The vast extent of their settlements, and greater distance from the centre of intelligence, may require more time to mature their judgment, and expose them to more deceptions by misrepresentation; but in the end, their sensations, reflections, and decisions, are purely American.

Your confidence in the legislature and administration has been perfectly well known from the commencement of the government, and has ever done it honor.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE BOROUGH OF HARRISBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA.

12 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Your address has been presented to me by Mr. Hartley, Mr. Sitgreaves, and Mr. Hanna, three of your representatives in Congress.

I know not which to admire most, the conciseness, the energy, the elegance, or profound wisdom of this excellent address.

Ideas of reformation and schemes for meliorating the condition of humanity should not be discouraged, when proposed with reason and pursued with moderation; but the rage for innovation, which destroys every thing because it is established, and introduces absurdities the most monstrous, merely because they are new, was never carried to such a pitch of madness in any age of the world as in this latter end of the boasted eighteenth century, and never produced effects so horrible upon suffering humanity.

Among all the appearances portentous of evil, there is none more incomprehensible than the professions of republicanism among those who place not a sense of justice, morality, or piety, among the ornaments of their nature and the blessings of society. As nothing is more certain and demonstrable than that free republicanism cannot exist without these ornaments and blessings, the tendency of the times is rapid towards a restoration of the petty military despotisms of the feudal anarchy, and by their means a return to the savage state of barbarous life.

How can the press prevent this, when all the presses of a nation, and indeed of many nations at once, are subject to an imprimatur, by a veto upon pain of conflagration, banishment, or confiscation?

That America may have the glory of arresting this torrent of

error, vice, and imposture, is my fervent wish; and if sentiments as great as those from Harrisburgh, should be found universally to prevail, as I doubt not they will, my hopes will be as sanguine as my wishes.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE YOUNG MEN OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

22 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

It is impossible for you to enter your own Faneuil Hall, or to throw your eyes on the variegated mountains and elegant islands around you, without recollecting the principles and actions of your fathers, and feeling what is due to their example. One of their first principles was to unite in themselves the character of citizens and soldiers, and especially to preserve the latter always subordinate to the former.

With much solicitude for your welfare and that of your posterity, I take the freedom to say that this country never appeared to me to be in greater danger than at this moment, from within or without, never more urgently excited to assume the functions of soldiers.

The state of the world is such, the situation of all the nations of Europe with which we have relation is so critical, that vicissitudes must be expected, from whose deleterious influences nothing but arms and energy can protect us. To arms, then, my young friends, — to arms, especially by sea, to be used as the laws shall direct, let us resort. For safety against dangers, which we now see and feel, cannot be averted by truth, reason, or justice.

Nothing in the earlier part of my public life animated me more than the countenances of the children and youth of the town of Boston; and nothing at this hour gives me so much pleasure as the masculine temper and talents displayed by the youth of America in every part of it.

I ought not to forget the worst enemy we have, that obloquy, which, you have observed, is the worst enemy to virtue and the best friend to vice; it strives to destroy all distinction between

right and wrong; it leads to divisions, sedition, civil war, and military despotism. I need say no more.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GRAND JURY FOR THE COUNTY OF PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS.

28 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your address, which has been transmitted to me according to your request by the Chief Justice of the State.

Difficult as it is to believe that a nation, struggling or pretending to struggle for liberty and independence, should attempt to invade or impair those blessings, where they are quietly and fully enjoyed; yet thus it is that the United States of America are not the only example of it.

While occupied in your peaceful employments, you have seen the fruits of your industry plundered by professed friends, your tranquillity has been disturbed by incessant appeals to the passions and prejudices of the people by designing men, and by audacious attempts to separate the people from the government; and there is not a village in the United States, perhaps, which cannot testify to similar abuses.

Liberty, independence, national honor, social order, and public safety, appear to you to be in danger; your acknowledgments to me, therefore, are the more obliging and encouraging.

Your prayers for my preservation, and your pledge that in any arduous issue to which the arts or arms of successful violence may compel us, you will, as becomes faithful citizens of this happy country, come forward as one man, in defence of all that is dear to us, are to me as affecting, as to the public they ought to be satisfactory sentiments — the more affecting to me, as they come from the most ancient settlement in the northern part of the continent, held in peculiar veneration by me at all times.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE SOLDIER CITIZENS OF NEW JERSEY.

31 MAY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

Among all the numerous addresses which have been presented to me in the present critical situation of our nation, there has been none which has done me more honor, none animated with a more glowing love of our country, or expressive of sentiments more determined and magnanimous. The submission you avow to the civil authority, an indispensable principle in the character of warriors in a free government, at the same moment when you make a solemn proffer of your lives and fortunes in the service of your country, is highly honorable to your dispositions as citizens and soldiers, and proves you perfectly qualified for the duties of both characters.

Officers and soldiers of New Jersey have as little occasion as they have disposition to boast. Their country has long boasted of their ardent zeal in the cause of freedom, and their invincible intrepidity in the day of battle.

Your voice of confidence and satisfaction, of firmness and determination to support the laws and Constitution of the United States, has a charm in it irresistible to the feelings of every American bosom; but when, in the presence of the God of armies and in firm reliance on his protection, you solemnly pledge your lives and fortunes, and your sacred honor, you have recorded words which ought to be indelibly imprinted on the memory of every American youth. With these sentiments in the hearts and this language in the mouths of Americans in general, the greatest nation may menace at its pleasure, and the degraded and the deluded characters may tremble, lest they should be condemned to the severest punishment an American can suffer — that of being conveyed in safety within the lines of an invading enemy.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS.

2 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

This kind address from the inhabitants of a division of the ancient and venerable town of Braintree, which has always been my home, is very obliging to me.

The tongues and pens of slander, instruments with which our enemies expect to subdue our country, I flatter myself have never made impressions on you, my ancient townsmen, to whom I have been so familiarly known from my infancy. A signal interposition of Providence has for once detected frauds and calumnies, which, from the inexecution of the laws and the indifference of the people were too long permitted to prevail.[1]

I am happy to see that your minds are deeply impressed with the danger of the present situation of our country, and that your resolutions to assert and defend your rights, are as judicious and determined as I have always known them to be upon former occasions.

I wish you every prosperity and felicity which you can wisely wish for yourselves.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE YOUNG MEN OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

GENTLEMEN,

I received this becoming, amiable, and judicious address from the young men of the city of New York with great pleasure.

The situation in which nature has placed your State, its

[1] "At the return of harmony in Congress, the heart of every true friend to America exults; the people, who in great numbers before, alarmingly separated in affection and confidence from their own government, and rendered jealous of the first characters of their own election, convinced of the snares spread for their country by foreign intrigue, are now crowding to its standard, and consecrating their fortunes and lives for its defence. So signal a providence for the detection of fraud, and the coalition of a people divided and consequently sinking into inevitable destruction, is perhaps a novelty in the annals of nations."— *Extract from the Braintree Address.*

numerous advantages, and its population so rapidly increasing, render it of great importance to the union of the nation, that its youth should be possessed of good principles and faithful dispositions. The specimen you have given in this address could not be more satisfactory.

I assure you, my young friends, that the satisfaction with my conduct, which has been expressed by the rising generation, has been one of the highest gratifications I ever received, because, if I have not been deceived in my own motives, I can sincerely say, that their happiness and that of their posterity, more than my own or that of my contemporaries, has been the object of the studies and labors of my life.

Your attachment to France was in common with Americans in general. The enthusiasm for liberty, which contributed to excite it, was in sympathy with great part of the people of Europe. The causes which produced that great event, were so extensive through the European world, and so long established, that it must appear a vast scheme of Providence, progressing to its end, incomprehensible to the views, designs, hopes, and fears of individuals or nations, kings or princes, philosophers or statesmen. It would be weak to ascribe the glory of it, or impute the blame to any individual or any nation; it would be equally absurd for any individual or nation to pretend to wisdom or power equal to the mighty task of arresting its progress or diverting its course. May the human race in general and the French nation in particular derive ultimately from it an amelioration of their condition, in the extension of liberty, civil and religious, in increased virtue, wisdom, and humanity! For myself, however, I confess, I see not how, nor when, nor where. In the mean time, these incomprehensible speculations ought not to influence our conduct in any degree. It is our duty to judge, by the standard of truth, integrity, and conscience, of what is right and wrong, to contend for our own rights, and to fight for our own altars and firesides, as much as at any former period of our lives. In your own beautiful and pathetic language, the same enthusiasm ought now to unite us more closely in the defence of our country, and inspire us with a spirit of resistance against the efforts of that republic to destroy our independence. If my enthusiasm is not more extravagant than yours has ever been, our independence will be one essential

instrument for reclaiming the fermented world, and bringing good out of the mass of evil.

The respect you acknowledge to your parents, is one of the best of symptoms. The ties of father, son, and brother, the sacred bands of marriage, without which those connections would be no longer dear and venerable, call on you and all your youth to beware of contaminating your country with the foul abominations of the French revolution.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS.

GENTLEMEN,

Next to the approbation of a good conscience, there is nothing, perhaps, which gives us more pleasure than the praise of those we love most, and who know us the most intimately.

I could not receive your address — in which I read with pleasure inexpressible the names of clergy and laity, officers and soldiers, magistrates and citizens of every denomination, among whom were the most aged, whose countenances I had respected, my school-fellows and the companions of my childhood, whom I had loved from the cradle, — without the liveliest emotions of gratitude and affection.

With you, my kind neighbors, I have ever lived in habits of freedom, friendship, and familiarity. We have always agreed very well in principles and opinions, and well knowing your love of your country and ardor in its defence, your explicit declaration upon this occasion, though unexpected, is no surprise to me. Accept of the best wishes of a sincere and faithful friend for a continuance of harmony among you, and for the prosperity of all your interests.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

2 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this address, subscribed by so large a number of respectable names, and for the expression of your satisfaction in my administration.

Difficulties were the inheritance to which I was born, and a double portion has been allotted to me. I have hitherto found in my integrity an impenetrable shield, and I trust it will continue to preserve me.

I pity the towns, which, under the guidance of rash or designing men, assembled without the necessary information, and passed resolutions which have exposed them to censure.

I receive and return with pleasure your congratulations on the present appearances of national union, and thank you for your assurances of support.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

15 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

An affectionate and respectful address from your two honorable houses has been presented to me, according to your request, by your senators and representatives in Congress.

The anxiety, the ancient and constant habit of the people of Massachusetts and their legislature, to take an early and decided part in whatever relates to the safety and welfare of their country, as well as their ardor, activity, valor, and ability in its defence by sea and land, are well known, and ought to be acknowledged by all the world.

The first forty years of my life were passed in my native Massachusetts, in a course of education and professional career, which led me to a very general acquaintance in every part of

that State. If, with your opportunities and pressing motives for observation and experience, you can pronounce my services successful, and administration virtuous, and the people of fifteen other States could concur with you in that opinion, my reward would be complete, and my most ardent wishes gratified.

If the object of France, in her revolution, ever was liberty, it was a liberty very ill defined and never understood. She now aims at dominion such as never has before prevailed in Europe. If with the principles, maxims, and systems of her present leaders she is to become the model and arbiter of nations, the liberties of the world will be in danger. Nevertheless, the citizens of Massachusetts, who were first to defend, will be among the last to resign the rights of our national sovereignty.

You have great reason to expect in this all-important conflict the ready and zealous coöperation of the free and enlightened people of America, and with humble confidence to rely on the God of our fathers for protection and success.

With you I fully agree, that a people, by whom the blessings of civil and religious liberty are enjoyed and duly appreciated, will never surrender them but with their lives. The patriotism and the energies of your constituents, united with those of the people of the other States, are a sure pledge that the charter of your civil and religious liberties, sealed by the blood of Americans, will never be violated by the sacrilegious hand of foreign power.

The solemn pledge of yourselves, to support every measure which the government of the United States at this momentous period may see fit to adopt to protect the commerce and preserve the independence of our country, must afford an important encouragement to the national government, and contribute greatly to the union of the people throughout all the States.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF ARLINGTON AND SANDGATE, VERMONT.

25 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this address, which has been presented to me by Mr. Chipman, one of your senators in Congress.

Sentiments like yours, which have been entertained for years, it would be at this time inexcusable not to express. If you have long seen foreign influence prevailing and endangering the peace and independence of our country, so have I. If you have long seen, with painful sensations, the exertions of dangerous and restless men, misleading the understandings of our well-meaning citizens, and prompting them to such measures as would sink the glory of our country and prostrate her liberties at the feet of France, so also have I.

I have seen in the conduct of the French nation, for the last twelve years, a repetition of their character displayed under Louis the fourteenth, and little more, excepting the extravagances, which have been intermixed with it, of the wildest philosophy which was ever professed in this world, since the building of Babel, and the fables of the giants, who, by piling mountains on mountains, invaded the skies. If the spell is broken, let human nature exult and rejoice. The veil may be removed from the eyes of many, but I fear, not of all. The snare is not yet entirely broken, and we are not yet escaped.

If you have no attachments or exclusive friendship for any foreign nation, you possess the genuine character of true Americans.

The pledge of yourselves and dearest enjoyments, to support the measures of government, shows that your ideas are adequate to the national dignity, and that you are worthy to enjoy its independence and sovereignty.

Your prayers for my life and usefulness are too affecting to me to be enlarged upon.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

29 JUNE, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

My most respectful and affectionate thanks are due to your two honorable houses for an address, transmitted to me by your excellent governor, and presented to me by your representatives in Congress.

The American nation appears to me, as it does to you, on the point of being drawn into the vortex of European war. Your entire satisfaction in the administration of the federal government, and in the perseverance which has marked its endeavors to adjust our disputes with France, is very precious to me. Distressing and alarming as the political situation of this country is, I am conscious that no measures, on my part, have been wanting, that could have honorably rendered it otherwise. The indignities which have been so repeatedly offered to our ambassadors, the greatest of which is the last unexampled insult, in choosing out one of the three, and discarding the other two, the wrongs and injuries to our commerce by French depredations, the legal declaration, in effect, of hostilities against all our commerce, and the apparent disposition of the government of France, seem to render further negotiation not only nugatory, but disgraceful and ruinous. You may tax the French government with ingratitude with much more justice than yourselves.

The increasing union among the people and their legislatures is as encouraging as it is agreeable. The precept, "divide and conquer," was never exemplified in the eyes of mankind in so striking and remarkable a manner as of late in Europe. Every old republic has fallen before it. If America has not spirit and sense enough to learn wisdom from the examples of so many republican catastrophes passing in review before her eyes, she deserves to suffer, and most certainly will fall. I am happy to assure you that, as far as my information extends, the opposition to the federal government in all the other States, as well as in New Hampshire, is too small to merit the name of division. It is a difference of sentiment on public measures, not an alienation of affection to their country.

The war-worn soldiers and the brave and hardy sons of New Hampshire, second to none in skill, enterprize, or courage in war, will never surrender the independence, or consent to the dishonor of their country.

I return my warmest wishes for your health and happiness.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE STUDENTS OF DICKINSON COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received from the hand of one of your senators in Congress, Mr. Bingham, your public and explicit declaration of your sentiments and resolutions at this important crisis, in an excellent address.

Although it ought not to be supposed that young gentlemen of your standing should be deeply versed in political disquisitions, because your time has been occupied in the pursuit of the elements of science and literature in general, yet the feelings of nature are a sure guide in circumstances like the present. I need not, however, make this apology for you. Few addresses, if any, have appeared more correct in principle, better arranged and digested, more decent and moderate, better reasoned and supported, or more full, explicit, and determined.

Since the date of your address, a fresh instance of the present spirit of a nation, or its government, whom you have been taught to call your friends, has been made public. Two of your envoys have been ordered out of the republic. Why? Answer this for yourselves, my young friends. A third has been permitted or compelled to remain. Why? To treat of loans, as preliminary to an audience, as the French government understands it; to wait for further orders, as your envoy conceives. Has any sovereign of Europe ever dictated to your country the person she should send as ambassador? Did the monarchy of France, or any other country, ever assume such a dictatorial power over the sovereignty of your country? Is the republic of the United States of America a fief of the republic of France? It is a question, whether even an equitable treaty, under such circumstances of indecency, insolence, and tyranny, ought ever to be

ratified by an independent nation. There is, however, no probability of any treaty, to bring this question to a decision.

If there are any who still plead the cause of France, and attempt to paralyse the efforts of your government, I agree with you, they ought to be esteemed our greatest enemies. I hope that none of you, but such as feel a natural genius and disposition to martial exercise and exertions, will ever be called from the pleasing walks of science to repel any attack upon your rights, liberties, and independence.

When you look up to me with confidence as the patron of science, liberty, and religion, you melt my heart. These are the choicest blessings of humanity; they have an inseparable union. Without their joint influence no society can be great, flourishing, or happy.

While I ardently pray that the American republic may always rise superior to her enemies, and transmit the purest principles of liberty to the latest ages, I beseech Heaven to bestow its choicest blessings on the governors and students of your college, and all other seminaries of learning in America.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE STUDENTS OF NEW JERSEY COLLEGE.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your well-judged and well-penned address, which has been presented to me by one of your senators in Congress, from New Jersey, Mr. Stockton.

To a high-spirited youth, possessed of that self-respect and self-esteem which is inseparable from conscious innocence and rectitude; whose bodies are not enervated by irregularities of life; whose minds are not weakened by dissipation or habits of luxury; whose natural sentiments are improved and fortified by classical studies; the aggressions of a foreign power must be disgusting and odious. On these facts alone I could answer for the youth of Nassau, that they will glory in defending the independence of their fathers.

The honor of your country you cannot estimate too highly. Reputation is of as much importance to nations, in proportion, as to individuals. Honor is a higher interest than reputation.

The man or the nation without attachment to reputation or honor, is undone. What is animal life, or national existence, without either?

The regret with which you view the encroachments of foreign nations, the impatience with which you contemplate their lawless depredations, are perfectly natural, and do honor to your characters.

If regrets would avert the necessity of military operations, it would be well to indulge them; but if the entire prosperity of a State depends upon the discipline of its armies, a maxim much respected by your fathers, you may hereafter be convinced that the cause of your country and of mankind may be promoted by means, which, from love to your country and a fear to set at defiance the laws of nature, you now see cause to regret.

The flame of enthusiasm which you in common with your fathers caught at the French revolution, could have been enkindled only by the innocence of your hearts and the purity of your intentions. Let me, however, my amiable and accomplished young friends, entreat you to study the history of that revolution, the history of France during the periods of the League and the Fronde, and the history of England from 1640 to 1660. In these studies you may perhaps find a solution of your disappointment in your hopes that the spirit which created, would conduct the revolution. You may find that the good intended by fair characters from the beginning, was defeated by Borgias and Catilines; that these fair characters themselves were inexperienced in freedom, and had very little reading in the science of government; that they were altogether inadequate to the cause they embraced, and the enterprise in which they embarked. You may find that the moral principles, sanctified and sanctioned by religion, are the only bond of union, the only ground of confidence of the people in one another, of the people in the government, and the government in the people. Avarice, ambition, and pleasure, can never be the foundations of reformations or revolutions for the better. These passions have dictated the aim at universal domination, trampled on the rights of neutrality, despised the faith of solemn compacts, insulted ambassadors, and rejected offers of friendship.

It is to me a flattering idea that you place any of your hopes of political security in me; mine are placed in your fathers

and you, and my advice to both is to place your confidence, under the favor of Heaven, in yourselves.

Your approbation of the conduct of government, and confidence in its authorities, are very acceptable. If the choice of the people will not defend their rights, who will? To me there appears no means of averting the storm; and, in my opinion, we must all be ready to dedicate ourselves to fatigues and dangers.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE OF CONNECTICUT.

GENTLEMEN,

An address so affectionate and respectful carries with it a dignity and authority, which is the more honorable to me as it comes from a legislature, which, although not in the habit of interfering in the administration of the general government, has exhibited a uniform affection for the national Constitution, and an undeviating respect to the laws and constituted authorities.

There can never be a time when it will be more necessary for the nation to express the sentiments by which it is animated, than when it is deeply injured by lawless aggressions, and insulted by imperious claims of a foreign power, professing to confide in our disunion, and boasting of the means of severing the affections of our citizens from the government of their choice.

Your approbation of the conduct and measures of government, and assurances of a firm and hearty support, are of great and high importance, and demand my most respectful and grateful acknowledgments.

With you I cherish our independence, revere the names, the virtues, and the sufferings of our ancestors, and admire the resolution, that the inestimable gift of civil and religious freedom shall never be impaired in our hands, and that no sacrifice of blood or treasure shall be esteemed too dear to transmit the precious inheritance to posterity.

I return my most fervent wishes for your personal happiness,

and the peace and the honor of the nation, committing all, with all their interests, to the God of our fathers.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CINCINNATI OF RHODE ISLAND.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your respectful remembrance of me on the birth-day of our United States. The clear conviction you acknowledge of the firm, patriotic, and enlightened policy pursued by the chief magistrate of the United States, after a review of the progress of his administration, will encourage his heart and strengthen his hands. Our country, supported by a great and respectable majority of its inhabitants, will not only be protected from a degrading submission to national insults, but be placed, I trust, on that point of elevation, where, by her courage and virtues, she is entitled to stand. The best "diplomatic skill" is *honesty*, and whenever the nation we complain of shall have recourse to *that*, she may depend upon an opportunity to boast of the success of her address — till then, she will employ her *finesse* in vain. On the day you resolved to live and die *free*, and declared yourselves ready to rally round the standard of your country, headed by that illustrious chief, who, at a time that proved the patriot and the hero, led you to victory — I was employed in the best of measures in my power to obtain a gratification of your wishes, which I am not without hopes may prove successful. In a country like ours, every sacrifice ought to be considered as nothing, when put in competition with the rights of a free and sovereign nation; and I trust that, by the blessing of Heaven, and the valor of our citizens, under their ancient and glorious leader, you will be able to transmit your fairest inheritance to posterity.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF DEDHAM AND OTHER TOWNS IN THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK, MASSACHUSETTS.

14 JULY, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for a friendly address, presented to me by your representative in Congress, Mr. Otis.

No faithful and intelligent American could pass the 4th of July this year, without strong sensations and deep reflections, excited by the perfidy, insolence, and hostilities of France. The ideas of never-ending repose in America were as visionary as the projects of universal and perpetual peace, which some ingenious and benevolent writers have amused themselves in composing.

We have too much intercourse with ambitious, enterprising, and warlike nations, and our commerce is of too much importance in their conflicts, to leave us a hope of remaining always neutral. Although our government has exhausted all the resources of its policy in endeavors to avoid engaging in the present uproar, neither the faith, justice, or gratitude of France would suffer it to succeed.

I know very well that political misinformation has been peculiarly active in the scene which you and I inhabit, and that too many have believed that France, though crushed under the iron hand of a military despotism, enjoyed liberty; that the inordinate ambition of her rulers for dominion was infused by a generous zeal to set oppressed nations free; that these nations were emancipated by being subdued, and though they lost their independence, they were gainers by some unknown equivalent gratuitously conferred by their conquerors.

If impostures so gross have had too much success, America is of all the people of the world the most excusable, for many particular reasons, for their credulity. The people of a great portion of Europe have been more fatally deceived; even the people of England, with all their national antipathies and under all the energies of their government, have been equally misinformed, and appear to be now more affected with remorse. The sobriety and steadiness of the American character will not suffer

more discredit than other nations, and we have certainly apologies to make, peculiar to ourselves.

That all Americans by birth, except perhaps a very few abandoned characters, have always preserved a superior affection for their own country, I am very confident; that we have thought too well of France, and France too meanly of us, I have been an eye and ear witness for twenty years. These errors on both sides must be corrected. She will soon learn that we will bear no yoke, that we will pay no tribute.

For delaying counsels, the Constitution has not made me responsible; but while I am entrusted with my present powers, and bound by my present obligations, you shall see no more delusive negotiations. The safe keeping of American independence is in the energy of its spirit and resources. In my opinion, as well as yours, there is no alternative between war and submission to the executive of France. If your fathers had not felt sentiments like these, they would have been "hewers of wood" to one foreign nation; and if you did not feel them, your posterity would be "drawers of water" to another.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this address. Your encomium on the executive authority of the national government, is in a degree highly flattering.

As I have ever wished to avoid, as far as prudence and necessity would permit, every concealment from my fellow-citizens of my real sentiments in matters of importance, I will venture to ask you whether it is consistent with the peace we have made, the friendship we have stipulated, or even with civility, to express a marked resentment to a foreign power who is at war with another, whose ill will we experience every day, and who will, very probably, in a few weeks be acknowledged an enemy in the sense of the law of nations. A power, too, which invariably acknowledged us to be a nation for fifteen years; a power that has never had the insolence to reject

your ambassadors; a power that at present convoys your trade and their own at the same time. Immortal hatred, inextinguishable animosity, is neither philosophy, true religion, nor good policy. Our ancient maxim was, "Enemies in war, in peace friends."

If Concord drank the first blood of martyred freemen, Concord should be the first to forget the injury, when it is no longer useful to remember it. Some of you, as well as myself, remember the war of 1755 as well as that of 1775. War always has its horrors, and civil wars the worst.

If the contest you allude to was dubious, it was from extrinsic causes; it was from partial, enthusiastic, and habitual attachment to a foreign country — not from any question of a party of strength. It is highly useful to reflect — fifty thousand men upon paper, and thirty thousand men in fact, was the highest number Britain ever had in arms in this country — compute the tonnage of ships necessary and actually employed to transport these troops across the Atlantic. What were thirty thousand men to the United States of America in 1775? What would sixty thousand be now in 1798?

Let not fond attachments, enthusiastic devotion to another power, paralyze the nerves of our citizens a second time, and all the ships in Europe that can be spared, officered, and manned, will not be sufficient to bring to this country an army capable of any long contest.

Your compliments to me are far beyond my merits. Your confidence in the government, and determination to support it, are greatly to your honor.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE STUDENTS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY, IN MASSACHUSETTS.

GENTLEMEN,

The companions, studies, and amusements of my youth, under the auspices of our *alma mater*, whom I shall ever hold in the highest veneration and affection, came fresh to my remembrance on receiving your address.[1]

[1] Of the committee which presented this address, William Ellery Channing was the chairman.

The maxims of life and the elements of literature, which have ever been inculcated in that ancient seat of education, could produce no other sentiments, in a juncture like this, than such as you have condensed into a form so concise, with so much accuracy, perspicuity, and beauty.

Removed from the scenes of intemperate pleasures, occupied with books, which impress the purest principles, and directed by governors, tutors, and professors, famous for science as well as eminent in wisdom, the studious youth of this country, in all our universities, could not fail to be animated with the intrepid spirit of their ancestors. Very few examples of degenerate characters are ever seen issuing from any of those seminaries. It is impossible that young gentlemen of your habits can look forward with pleasure to a long career of life, in a degraded country, in society with disgraced associates. Your first care should be to preserve the stage from reproach, and your companions in the drama from dishonor.

But if it were possible to suppose you indifferent to shame, what security can you have for the property you may acquire, or for the life of vegetation you must lead? What is to be the situation of the future divine, lawyer, or physician? the merchant or navigator? the cultivator or proprietor?

Your youthful blood has boiled, and it ought to boil. You need not, however, be discouraged. If your cause should require defence in arms, your country will have armies and navies in which you may secure your own honor, and advance the power, prosperity, and glory of your contemporaries and posterity.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE FREEMASONS OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this generous and noble address.

The zeal you display to vindicate your society from the imputations and suspicions of being "inimical to regular government and divine religion," is greatly to your honor. It has been an opinion of many considerate men, as long as I can remember, that your society might, in some time or other, be made an

instrument of danger and disorder to the world. Its ancient existence and universal prevalence are good proofs that it has not heretofore been applied to mischievous purposes; and in this country I presume that no one has *attempted* to employ it for purposes foreign from its *original* institution. But in an age and in countries where *morality* is, by such numbers, considered as mere *convenience*, and *religion* a *lie*, you are better judges than I am, whether ill uses have been or may be made of Masonry.

Your appeal to my own breast, and your declaration that I shall *there* find your sentiments, I consider as a high compliment; and feel a pride in perceiving and declaring that the opinions, principles, and feelings expressed are conformable to my own. With you I fear that no hope remains but in preparation for the worst that may ensue.

Persevere, gentlemen, in revering the Constitution which secures your liberties, in loving your country, in practising the *social* as well as the *moral* duties, in presenting your lives, with those of your fellow-citizens, a barrier to defend your independence, and may the architect all-powerful surround you with walls impregnable, and receive you, finally (your country happy, prosperous, and glorious), to mansions eternal in the Heavens!

With heart-felt satisfaction, I reciprocate your most sincere congratulations on an occasion the most interesting to Americans. No light or trivial cause would have given you the opportunity of beholding your Washington again relinquishing the tranquil scenes in delicious shades. To complete the character of French philosophy and French policy, at the end of the eighteenth century, it seemed to be necessary to combat this patriot and hero.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND.

GENTLEMEN,

Your address has been presented to me by your representative in Congress, Mr. Baer.

When you say that the government of France is congenial

to your own, I pray you, gentlemen, to reconsider the subject. The Constitution, the administration, the laws, and their interpretation in France, are as essentially different from ours as the ancient monarchy. If we may believe travellers returned from that country, or their own committees, the pomp and magnificence, the profusion of expense, the proud usurpation, the domineering inequality at present in that country, as well as the prostitution of morals and depravation of manners, exceed all that ever was seen under the old monarchy, and form the most perfect contrast to your own in all those respects. I shall meet with sincerity any honorable overtures of that nation, but I shall make no more overtures.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, VIRGINIA.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this address, presented to me by your representative in Congress, Mr. New.

The principle of neutrality has indeed been maintained on the part of the United States with inviolable faith, notwithstanding every embarrassment and provocation, both of injury and insult, until we have been forced out of it by an actual war made upon us, though not manfully declared.

For reasons that are obvious to all the world, you may easily imagine, that every manifestation of candor towards me from any part of Virginia must be peculiarly agreeable. The handsome expressions of your approbation deserve my thanks. Every thing has been done short of a resignation of our independence. A resignation of our *independence!* I blush to write the words; there would be as much sense in speaking of a resignation of the independence of France, or Germany, or Russia. We are a nation as much established as any of them, and as able to maintain our sovereignty, absolute and unlimited by sea and land, as any of them.

It is too much to expect that all party divisions will be done away as long as there are rival States and rival individuals; all

we can reasonably hope is, and this we may confidently expect, that no State or individual, to gratify its ambition, will enlist under foreign banners.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF A DEPUTATION FROM EACH MILITIA COMPANY OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH REGIMENT, IN THE COUNTY OF BOTETOURT, VIRGINIA.

GENTLEMEN,

A copy of your unanimous resolutions together with an address, signed by your chairman, has been presented to me by one of your representatives in Congress, Mr. Evans.

The confidence of the people of Virginia, or any such respectable portion of them, is peculiarly agreeable to me, as it evinces a tendency to a restoration of that harmony and union, which I well remember to have once existed, and which was so auspicious to the American cause, but which has been apparently interrupted since the commencement of the federal government.

It is scarcely possible that I should ever read a sentence more delightful to my heart than those words, "We admire the consistency of your character, and are pleased to see the same firmness, integrity, and patriotism, at the present day, so eminently displayed in the great crisis of the American revolution."

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF CINCINNATI AND ITS VICINITY, IN THE NORTH-WESTERN TERRITORY.

11 AUGUST, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received and read with much pleasure your unanimous address of the 29th of June. I agree with you that, in the ordinary course of affairs, interpositions of popular meetings, to overawe those to whom the management of public affairs are confided, will seldom be warranted by discretion, or found com-

patible with the good order of society; but, at a period like this, there is no method more infallible to determine the question, whether the people are or are not united. Upon no occasion in the history of America has this mode of discovering and ascertaining the public opinion been so universally resorted to. And it may be asserted with confidence, that at no period of the existence of the United States have evidences of the unanimity of the people been given, so decided as on the present question with France.

The people of this country, the most remote from the seat of government and centre of information, as well as those in its neighborhood, have at length discovered that they are Americans, and feelingly alive to the injuries committed against their country, and to the indignities offered to their government. Upon ourselves only we ought to depend for safety and defence. This maxim, however, by no means forbids us to avail ourselves of the advantages of prudent and well guarded concert with others exposed to common dangers. Animated with sentiments like yours, our country is able to defend itself against any enemies that may rise up against it.

Nothing can be more flattering to me than your assurances of confidence in this perilous hour; and nothing could mortify me so much as that you should ever have reason to believe that your confidence has been misplaced. In return for your prayers for my personal happiness, I sincerely offer mine for the prosperity of the north-western territory, in common with all the United States.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF HARRISON COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

18 AUGUST, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received with great pleasure your address from your committee. The attachment you profess to our government, calculated as it is to insure liberty and happiness to its citizens, is commendable. Your declaration, in plain and undisguised language, that the measures which have been taken to promote

a good understanding, peace, and harmony between this country and France, are becoming my character and deserving your confidence, is a great encouragement to me. With you I see with infinite satisfaction, that the alarming prospect of a war, which is seen to be just and necessary, has silenced all essential differences of opinions, and that a union of sentiment appears to prevail very generally throughout our land. I believe, however, that the distinction of *aristocrat* and *democrat*, however odious and pernicious it may be rendered by political artifice at particular conjunctures, will never be done away, as long as some men are taller and others shorter, some wiser and others sillier, some more virtuous and others more vicious, some richer and others poorer. The distinction is grounded on unalterable nature, and human wisdom can do no more than reconcile the parties by equitable establishments and equal laws, securing, as far as possible, to every one his own. The distinction was intended by nature for the order of society, and the benefit of mankind. The parties ought to be like the sexes, mutually beneficial to each other. And woe will be to that country, which supinely suffers malicious demagogues to excite jealousies, foment prejudices, and stimulate animosities between them!

I adore with you the genius and principles of that religion, which teaches, as much as possible, to live peaceably with all men; yet, it is impossible to be at peace with *injustice* and *cruelty*, with *fraud* and *violence*, with *despotism*, *anarchy*, and *impiety*. A *purchased* peace could continue no longer than you continue to pay; and the field of battle at once, is infinitely preferable to a course of perpetual and unlimited contribution.

Deeply affected with your prayers for the continuance of my life, I can only say, that my age and infirmities scarcely allow me a hope of being the happy instrument of conducting you through the impending storm.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE YOUNG MEN OF RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.

GENTLEMEN,

An address so respectful to me, so faithful to the nation, and

true to its government, from so honorable a portion of the young men of Richmond, cannot fail to be very acceptable to me.

You will not take offence, I hope, at my freedom, however, if I say, that if you had been taught to cherish in your hearts an esteem and friendship for France, it would have been enough; more than these, toward any foreign power, had better be reserved.

It might have been as well for us in America, whose distance is so great, and whose knowledge of France and her government was so imperfect, to have suspended our veneration for the mighty effort which overturned royalty, until we should have seen all degrading despotism at an end in the country, and something more consistent with virtue, equality, liberty, and humanity, substituted in its place. Hitherto the progress has been from bad to worse.

The conduct of the French government towards us is of a piece with their behaviour to their own citizens and a great part of Europe. Your sensibility to their insults and injuries to your country, is very becoming, and your resolution to resist them do you honor.

A fresh insult is now offered to all America, and especially to her government, in the arbitrary dismission of two of their envoys, with scornful intimations of capricious prejudices against them. But I am weary of enumerating insults and injuries.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF ACCOMAC COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

GENTLEMEN,

I pray you to accept my thanks for your unanimous address, replete with sentiments truly American.

Your conviction, that your government has manifested a most earnest and sincere desire to preserve peace with all nations, particularly with the French republic; your declaration that, upon a candid review of the conduct of your government, you can discover nothing which ought to have given umbrage to that republic, or which can in any wise justify her numerous aggressions on the persons and properties of our citizens, in

direct violation of the law of nations, and in contravention of her existing treaties with us — ought to give entire satisfaction to the government.

Your concern and regret, that those efforts to maintain harmony have proved abortive, are natural and common to you and me and all our fellow-citizens, but can be of no use; instead of dwelling on our regrets, we must explore our resources. Although we may view war as particularly injurious to the interests of our country, Providence may intend it for our good, and we must submit. That it is a less evil than national dishonor, no man of sense and spirit will deny.

I have no hope that the French republic will soon return to a sense of justice.

Your promise to coöperate in whatever measures government may deem conducive to the interests, and consistent with the honor of the nation, and your pledge of your lives and fortunes, and all you hold dear, upon the success of the issue, are in the true spirit of men, of freemen, of Americans, and genuine republicans.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

31 AUGUST, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received your unanimous address. If an address of so much dignity and authority could have received any addition from the channel of conveyance, you have chosen that which is nearest to my heart, in his Excellency John Jay, Esquire, the governor of the State of New York, of whose purity, patriotism, fortitude, independence, and profound wisdom, I have been a witness for a long course of years. The position in the Union of the great and growing State of New York, its incalculable advantages in agriculture as well as commerce, render this unanimous act of the two houses of its legislature one of the most important events of the present year.

With the most sincere respect and cordial satisfaction, gentlemen, I congratulate you on the decided appearance in America

of a solid, national character. From the Mississippi to the St. Croix, unquestionable proofs have been given of national feelings, national principles, and a national system. This is all that was wanting to establish the power of the American people, and insure the respect and justice of other nations.

For all that is personal to myself, I pray you to accept my best thanks. I never have had, and I never shall have, any claims on the gratitude of my country. If I have done my duty to them, and they are convinced of it, this is all I have desired or shall desire.

The strong claims which your State holds in the national defence and protection, will have every attention that depends on me.

I thank you for the expression of the satisfaction you derive from the fresh instance of great and disinterested patriotism, which my illustrious predecessor has manifested. May he long continue to be, as he ever has been, the instrument of great good, and the example of great virtue to his fellow-citizens! The last act of his political life, in accepting his appointment, will be recorded in history as one of the most brilliant examples of public virtue that ever was exhibited among mankind.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE BOSTON MARINE SOCIETY, MASSACHUSETTS.

7 SEPTEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for this respectful address. The existence of the independence of any nation cannot be more grossly attacked, the sovereign rights of a country cannot be more offensively violated, than by a refusal to receive ambassadors sent as ministers of explanation and concord; especially if such refusal is accompanied with public and notorious circumstances of deliberate indignity, insult, and contempt. Indiscriminate despoliations on our commerce, grounded on the contemptuous opinion that we are a divided, defenceless, and mercenary people, are not so egregious and aggravated a provocation offered to the

face of a whole nation as the former. I rejoice that you indignantly feel that you dare to resent; and that you hope to vindicate the injured and insulted character of our common country. When friendship becomes insult, or is permitted only on terms dictated and imposed, it becomes an intolerable yoke, and it is time to shake it off. Better at once to become generous enemies, than maintain a delusive and precarious connection with such insidious friends.

Whatever pretexts the French people, or a French prince of the blood with his train, or a combination of families of the first quality with officers of the army, had, for their efforts for the annihilation of the monarchy, we certainly, far from being under any obligation, had no right or excuse to interfere for their assistance. If, by the collateral props of the monarchy, you mean the nobility and the clergy, what has followed the annihilation of them? All their revenues have been seized and appropriated by another prop of the old monarchy, the army; and the nation is become, as all other nations of Europe are becoming, if French principles and systems prevail, a congregation of soldiers and serfs. The French revolution has ever been incomprehensible to me. The substance of all that I can understand of it is, that one of the pillars of the ancient monarchy, that is the army, has fallen upon the other two, the nobility and the clergy, and broken them both down. The building has fallen, of course, and this pillar is now the whole edifice. The military serpent has swallowed that of Aaron, and all the rest. If the example should be followed through Europe, when the officers of the armies begin to quarrel with one another, five hundred years more of Barons' wars may succeed. If the French, therefore, will become the enemies of all mankind, by forcing all nations to follow their example, in the subversion of all the political, religious, and social institutions, which time, experience, and freedom have sanctioned, they ought to be opposed by every country that has any pretensions to principle, spirit, or patriotism.

Floating batteries and wooden walls have been my favorite system of warfare and defence for this country for three and twenty years. I have had very little success in making proselytes. At the present moment, however, Americans in general, cultivators as well as merchants and mariners, begin to look to

that source of security and protection; and your assistance will have great influence and effect in extending the opinion in theory, and in introducing and establishing the practice.

Your kind wishes for my life and health demand my most respectful and affectionate gratitude, and the return of my sincere prayers for the health and happiness of the Marine Society at Boston, as well as for the security and prosperity of the military and commercial marine of the United States, in which yours is included.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CINCINNATI OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

15 SEPTEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

With great respect and esteem I receive your unanimous address, agreed on at a meeting expressly called for that purpose on the 22d of August. That men who cheerfully arranged themselves in the front rank to oppose the most formidable attack that was ever made on their country; that men who have experienced the delightful reflection of having contributed to the establishment of the liberties and independence of their country, and have enjoyed the sweetest of rewards in the grateful affection of their fellow-citizens; that such men should even be lukewarm when the object of their fondest attachment is in jeopardy, is incredible. I rejoice in your approbation of the conduct adopted and pursued with France. Conciliation has been pursued with more patience and perseverance than can be perfectly reconciled with our national reputation. At least, if we can reconcile it with our national character and independence, it must be by peculiar circumstances that we can excuse it in the opinion of an impartial world — if indeed, at this day, there is an impartial world. Posterity, who may be impartial enough to pass an equitable judgment, will allow that the form of our government, our late connections and relations, and the present state of all nations, furnish an apology well grounded on equity and humanity.

The French, and too many Americans have miscalculated.

They have betrayed to the whole world their ignorance of the American character. As to the French, I know of no government ancient or modern that ever betrayed so universal and decided a contempt of the people of all nations, as the present rulers of France. They have manifested a settled opinion that the people have neither sense nor integrity in any country, and they have acted accordingly.

When you weighed tribute and dependence against war, you might have added immorality and irreligion to the former scale. What shall we think of those who can weigh tribute, dependence, immorality, irreligion, against pounds, livres, or florins? When the Cincinnati of South Carolina pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, I believe no man will doubt their integrity.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF DUTCHESS, NEW YORK.

22 SEPTEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received and read with great pleasure your address of the 1st of September, which, in this kind of writing, with a few explanations, may be considered as a model of sense and spirit, as well as of taste and eloquence.

Is there any mode imaginable in which contempt of the understanding and feelings of a nation can be expressed with so much aggravation, as by affecting to treat the government of their choice as an usurpation?

If in some instances marks of disaffection have appeared in your State, it is indeed exceedingly to be regretted. If this has been owing to the influx of foreigners, of discontented characters, it ought to be a warning. If we glory in making our country an asylum for virtue in distress and for innocent industry, it behoves us to beware, that under this pretext it is not made a receptacle of malevolence and turbulence, for the outcasts of the universe.

The conduct of France must not disgrace the cause of free governments. With the tears and the blood of millions, she

has demonstrated that a free government must be organized and adjusted with a strict attention to the nature of man, and the interests and passions of the various classes of which society is composed; but she has not made any rational apology for the advocates of despotic government. Society cannot exist without laws, and those laws must be executed. In nations that are populous, opulent, and powerful, the concurrent interests of great bodies of men operate very forcibly on their passions, break down the barriers of modesty, decency, and morality, and can be restrained only by force; but there are methods of combining the public force in such a manner as to restrain the most formidable combinations of interests, passions, imagination, and prejudice, without recourse to despotic government. To these methods it is to be hoped the nations of Europe will have recourse, rather than to surrender all to military dictators or hereditary despots.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF ULSTER, NEW YORK.

26 SEPTEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received with great pleasure your address of the 14th of this month, and I know not whether any that has been published contains more important matter or juster sentiments. It must be great perverseness and depravity in any, who can represent the late acts of government, and the necessary measures of self-defence taken by Congress, as a coalition with Great Britain. It may be useful, however, to analyze our ideas upon this subject. If by a coalition with Great Britain be meant a return as colonies under the government of that country, I declare I know of no individual in America who would consent to it, nor do I believe that Great Britain would receive us in that character. Sure I am it would be in her the blindest policy she ever conceived, for she has already the most incontestable proof that she cannot govern us. If by a coalition be meant a perpetual alliance, offensive and defensive, can it be

supposed that two thirds of the Senate of the United States would advise or consent to it without necessity? Besides, is any one certain that Britain would agree to it, if we should propose it? I believe Americans in general have already seen enough of perpetual alliances. Nevertheless, if France has made or shall make herself our enemy, and has forced or shall force upon us a war in our own defence, can we avoid being useful to Britain while we are defending ourselves? Can Britain avoid being useful to us while defending herself or annoying her enemy? Would it not be a want of wisdom in both to avoid any opportunity of aiding each other?

Your civilities to me are very obliging, and deserve my best thanks.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF NEWBERN, NORTH CAROLINA.

GENTLEMEN,

An address so cordial and respectful as this from the citizens of Newbern, and your warm approbation of my conduct since I have filled the office of chief magistrate of the United States, I ought to hold in the highest estimation.

I was indeed called to it at a crisis fraught with difficulty and danger, when neither skill in the management of affairs, more improved than any I could pretend to, nor the purest integrity of intention, could secure an entire exemption from involuntary error, much less from censure.

There have been for many years strong indications that nothing would satisfy the rulers of the French, but our taking with them an active part in the war against all their enemies, and exhausting the last resources of our property to support them, not only in the pursuit of their chimerical ideas of liberty, but of universal empire. This we were not only under no obligation to do, but had reason to believe would have ruined the laws, constitution, and the morals of our country, as well as our credit and property.

An ardent enthusiasm, indeed, deluded for a long time too many of our worthy citizens.

The honor of your testimony to the integrity of my endeavors in so difficult a conjuncture, is very precious to my heart.

As the hostile views and nefarious designs of the French republic are now too notorious to be denied or extenuated, I believe with you, that the love of our common country will produce a cordial unanimity of sentiment.

This patriotic and spirited address is a clear indication of such desirable union, and will have a powerful tendency to encourage, strengthen, and promote it.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE SIXTH BRIGADE OF THE THIRD DIVISION OF NORTH CAROLINA MILITIA.

26 SEPTEMBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

An address from seven thousand two hundred and ninety-four men, a number sufficient to compose a respectable army, giving assurance of their approbation of public measures, and their determination as men and soldiers to support them with their lives, must be a pleasing appearance to every lover of his country. There is no part of the union from which such sentiments could be received with more cordial satisfaction than from the virtuous cultivators and independent planters of the populous and powerful State of North Carolina. It is happy for us, and it will be fortunate for the cause of free government, that America can still unite in the most heartfelt satisfaction, at seeing the military reins placed in the hands of the present Commander-in-chief. Your prayers for my life, health, and prosperity demand my best thanks, and a return of mine for yours with the same sincerity of heart.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GRAND JURORS OF THE COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS.

8 OCTOBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received with much pleasure your address of the 28th of September from Northampton.

The manifestations of your respect, approbation, and confidence are very flattering to me, and your determination to support the Constitution and laws of your country is honorable to yourselves. If a new order of things has commenced, it behoves us to be cautious, that it may not be for the worse. If the abuse of Christianity can be annihilated or diminished, and a more equitable enjoyment of the right of conscience introduced, it will be well; but this will not be accomplished by the abolition of Christianity and the introduction of Grecian mythology, or the worship of modern heroes or heroines, by erecting statues of idolatry to reason or virtue, to beauty or to taste. It is a serious problem to resolve, whether all the abuses of Christianity, even in the darkest ages, when the Pope deposed princes and laid nations under his interdict, were ever so bloody and cruel, ever bore down the independence of the human mind with such terror and intolerance, or taught doctrines which required such implicit credulity to believe, as the present reign of pretended philosophy in France.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF MACHIAS, DISTRICT OF MAINE.

5 OCTOBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received and considered your elegant address of the 10th August. Although you reside in a remote part of the United States, it is very manifest you have not been inattentive or indifferent spectators of the dangerous encroachments of a

foreign nation. You are of opinion that no connection with the present governors of that nation or their agents, ought to be sought or desired. Your country, I presume, will not meanly sue for peace, or engage in war from motives of ambition, vanity, or revenge. I presume further, that she will never again suffer her ambassadors to remain in France many days or hours unacknowledged, without an audience of the sovereign, unprotected and unprivileged, nor to enter into conferences or conversations with any agents or emissaries, who have not a regular commission of equal rank with their own, and who shall not have shown their original commission and exchanged official copies with them. While extraordinary circumstances are our apology for the past deviation from established rules, founded in unquestionable reason and propriety, the odious consequences of it will be an everlasting admonition to avoid the like for the future. At present we have only to prepare for action.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE FIRST BRIGADE OF THE THIRD DIVISION OF THE MILITIA OF MASSACHUSETTS.

11 OCTOBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received from Major-General Hull and Brigadier-General Walker your unanimous address from Lexington, animated with a martial spirit, and expressed with a military dignity becoming your character and the memorable plains on which it was adopted.

While our country remains untainted with the principles and manners which are now producing desolation in so many parts of the world; while she continues sincere, and incapable of insidious and impious policy, we shall have the strongest reason to rejoice in the local destination assigned us by Providence. But should the people of America once become capable of that deep simulation towards one another, and towards foreign nations, which assumes the language of justice and moderation while it is practising iniquity and extravagance, and displays

in the most captivating manner the charming pictures of candor, frankness, and sincerity, while it is rioting in rapine and insolence, this country will be the most miserable habitation in the world; because we have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

An address from the officers commanding two thousand eight hundred men, consisting of such substantial citizens as are able and willing at their own expense completely to arm and clothe themselves in handsome uniforms, does honor to that division of the militia which has done so much honor to its country.

Oaths in this country are as yet universally considered as sacred obligations. That which you have taken and so solemnly repeated on that venerable spot, is an ample pledge of your sincerity and devotion to your country and its government.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE GUILFORD REGIMENT OF MILITIA, AND THE INHABITANTS OF GUILFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA.

19 OCTOBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

The unanimous address adopted by you, has been transmitted, as you directed, by Major John Hamilton to Mr. Steele, and by Mr. Steele to me.

Addresses like yours, so friendly to me and so animated with public spirit, can never stand in need of any apology. It is, on the contrary, very true, that the affectionate addresses of my fellow-citizens have flowed in upon me, from various parts of the Union, in such numbers, that it has been utterly impossible for me to preserve any regularity in my answers, without neglecting the indispensable daily duties of my office. This, and a long continued and very dangerous sickness in my family, most

seriously alarming to me, will, I hope, be accepted by you, and by all others whose favors have not been duly noticed, as an apology for a seeming neglect, which has been a very great mortification to me. There is no language within my command, sufficient to express the satisfaction I have felt at the abundant proofs of harmony and unanimity among the people, especially in the southern States, and in none more remarkably than in North Carolina.

Your patriotic address, adopted on the ground where a memorable battle was fought by freemen, on the 15th of March, 1781, in defence of their liberties and independence, is peculiarly forcible and affecting.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE THIRD DIVISION OF GEORGIA MILITIA.

31 OCTOBER, 1798.

GENTLEMEN,

An address so full of attachment to the Constitution, confidence in the government, and respect and affection to me, adopted by so large a portion of the militia, and subscribed by so long a list of respectable officers, demands my most respectful and affectionate acknowledgments.

The honest zeal of our countrymen for a cause which they thought connected with liberty and humanity, might lead some of them to intemperate irregularities, which a sound discretion and strict policy could not justify; and these might lead the French government and their agents into some of the unwarrantable measures they have hazarded. Wisdom will teach us a lesson from this experience, to be more upon our guard in future, more slow to speak, and more swift to hear. It should even teach us to be cautious, that we may not be hurried into a contrary extreme.

The acceptance of General Washington has commanded the admiration of all men of principle. A soul so social and public as his could not live tranquil in retirement in a country bleeding around him. Those who were most delighted with the thought

of his undisturbed happiness in retreat, after a life of anxiety, cannot but approve of his resolution to take the field again with his fellow-citizens, and close his long glories in active life, in case his country should be invaded.

I am happy if my answer to the young men of Augusta has your approbation, and receive and return with gratitude your kind wishes for my health and happiness.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE GRAND JURY OF MORRIS COUNTY, IN NEW JERSEY.

8 APRIL, 1799.

GENTLEMEN,

Your obliging address at the Circuit Court of the State, in the March term of this year, has been transmitted to me by Elisha Boudinot, Esquire, one of the Justices of your Supreme Court, according to your request.

The indignation you express at the combinations to resist the operation of the laws, is evincive of the dispositions of good citizens, and does you much honor. That infatuation which alone can excite citizens to rise in arms against taxes laid in consideration of the necessities of the State, and with great deliberation, by their representatives, and which induces an obvious necessity of raising more taxes, in order to defray the expense of suppressing their own presumptuous folly, is indeed surprising. That the laws must be obeyed in a government of laws, is an all important lesson. For what can be more destructive of liberty and property than government without law, whether in one, few, or many? Insurrection itself is government assumed, and without law, though partial and temporary, and without right.

While the door is not closed by any foreign compact, or by obvious principles of policy or justice, it will always by me be held open, from a sense of my duty, for an accommodation of differences with any and all nations, however "powerful, insidious, or dangerous" they may be supposed to be, unless I could see a probable prospect of rendering them less so by our

interference. "Dangers to the peace, rights, and liberties of mankind," arising from their corruptions and divisions, are too numerous to be controlled by us, who from our situation have of all nations the least colorable pretensions to assume the balance and the rod. If we are forced into the scale, it will be against our inclination and judgment; and however light we may be thought to be, we will weigh as heavy as we can.

The end of even war is peace. Your approbation gives me pleasure. Whenever we have enemies, it will be their own fault; and they will be under no necessity of continuing enemies longer than they choose. In the present crisis, however, we ought to continue, with unabated ardor, all our preparations and operations of defence.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CITIZENS, INHABITANTS OF THE MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY.

8 APRIL, 1799.

GENTLEMEN,

With much pleasure I have received, through your able and faithful Governor, your obliging address of the 5th of January.

As your situation on a frontier of the United States, near a nation under whose government many of you have lived, and with whose inhabitants you are well acquainted, qualifies you in a particular manner to maintain a benevolent, pacific, and friendly conduct towards your neighbors, and entitles you to a return of a similar behavior from them; it is to be hoped and expected that the peace and friendship between the two nations will be by these means preserved and promoted, and that the emissaries of no other nation that may be hostile, will be able to destroy or diminish your mutual esteem and regard.

The sentiments of attachment to the Constitution which you avow, are such as become the best Americans, and will secure you the confidence of government, and the esteem and affection of your fellow-citizens throughout the Union.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.

5 JUNE, 1800.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

I receive with pleasure, in this address, your friendly welcome to the city, and particularly this place. I congratulate you on the blessings which Providence has been pleased to bestow in a particular manner on this situation, and especially on its destination to be the permanent seat of government. May the future councils of this august temple be forever governed by truth and liberty, friendship, virtue, and faith, which, as they are themselves the chief good and principal blessings of human nature, can never fail to insure the union, safety, prosperity, and glory of America!

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CITIZENS OF ALEXANDRIA.

11 JUNE, 1800.

GENTLEMEN,

I receive from the citizens of Alexandria this kind salutation on my first visit to Virginia with much pleasure. In the earlier part of my life, I felt, at some times, an inexpressible grief, and at others, an unutterable indignation, at the injustice and indignities which I thought wantonly heaped on my innocent, virtuous, peaceable, and unoffending country. And perceiving that the American people, from New Hampshire to Georgia, felt and thought in the same manner, I determined, refusing all favors and renouncing all personal obligations to the aggressors, to run every hazard with my countrymen, at their invitation, by sea and land, in opposition and resistance, well knowing that if we should be unfortunate, all the pains and all the disgrace which injustice and cruelty could inflict, would be the destination of me and mine. Providence smiled on our well-meant endeavours, and perhaps in no particular more remarkably than in giving us your incomparable Washington for the leader of our armies. Our country has since enjoyed an enviable tran-

quillity and uncommon prosperity. We are grown a great people. This city, and many others which I have seen since I left Philadelphia, exhibit very striking proofs of our increase, on which I congratulate you. May no error or misfortune throw a veil over the bright prospect before us!

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE CORPORATION OF NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT.

1 JULY, 1800.

GENTLEMEN,

I receive with sincere satisfaction this testimony of esteem from the corporation of this respectable city of New London.

The part I took in our important and glorious revolution was the effect of a sense of duty; of the natural feelings of a man for his native country and the native country of his ancestors for several generations; of all the principles, moral, civil, political, and religious, in which I had been educated; and if it had been even more injurious than it has been, or ever so destructive to my private affairs, or ruinous to my family, I should never repent it. I did but concur with my fathers, friends, fellow-citizens, and countrymen, in their sensations and reflections, and lay no claim to more than a common share with them in the result.

It would be devoutly and eternally to be deplored, if this most glorious achievement, or the principal characters engaged in it, should ever fall into disgrace in the eyes of Americans.

In return for your kind wishes, gentlemen, I wish you every blessing.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE COUNTY OF EDGECOMBE, NORTH CAROLINA.

15 AUGUST, 1800.

GENTLEMEN,

I received last night, and have read with serious concern, mingled with lively sentiments of gratitude, your animated address. As, from the nature of our government, the choice of the first magistrate will generally fall on men advanced in years, we ought to be prepared to expect frequent changes of persons, from accidents, infirmities, and death, if not from election; but it is to be presumed that the good sense and integrity of the people, which the Constitution supposes, will indicate characters and principles, that may continue the spirit of an administration which has been found salutary and satisfactory to the nation, when persons must be changed. I cannot give up the hope that to be active in fault finding, and clamorous against wise laws and just measures of government, is not to be most popular. When popularity becomes so corrupt, if it cannot be corrected, all is lost.

For forty years my mind has been so entirely occupied and engrossed with public cares, that I have not been able to give much attention to any thing else. Whatever advantages this country may have derived from my feeble efforts, I wish they had been much greater, and less disputable. If any disadvantages have resulted from them, I hope they will be pardoned, as the effect of involuntary error — for I will be bold to say, no man ever served his country with purer intentions, or from more disinterested motives.

You may rely upon this, that, as, on the one hand, I never shall love war, or seek it for the pleasure, profit, or honor of it, so, on the other, I shall never consent to avoid it, but upon honorable terms.

Very far am I from thinking your determination desperate, to risk your lives and fortunes in support of your constitutional rights and privileges. I perceive no disposition in the American people to go to war with each other; and no foreign hostilities

that can be apprehended in a just and necessary cause, have any terrors for you or me.

Your fervent prayer for the long continuance of my days, shall be accompanied by mine, for the much longer continuance of your laws, liberties, prosperity, and felicity.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MASSACHUSETTS.

26 MARCH, 1801.

The very respectful, affectionate, and obliging address, which has been presented to me by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, by your order, has awakened all my sensibility, and demands my most grateful acknowledgments.

As the various testimonials of the approbation and affection of my fellow-citizens of Massachusetts, which have been indulged to me from my earliest youth, have ever been esteemed the choicest blessings of my life, so this final applause of the legislature, so generously given after the close of the last scene of the last act of my political drama, is more precious than any which preceded it. There is now no greater felicity remaining for me to hope or desire, than to pass the remainder of my days in repose, in an undisturbed participation of the common privileges of our fellow-citizens under your protection.

The satisfaction you have found in the administration of the general government from its commencement, is highly agreeable to me; and I sincerely hope that the twelve years to come will not be less prosperous or happy for our country.

With the utmost sincerity, I reciprocate your devout supplications, for the happiness of yourselves, your families, constituents, and posterity.

JOHN ADAMS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CORRESPONDENCE

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN

THE BOSTON PATRIOT.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

THE antipathy secretly entertained by Alexander Hamilton to John Adams, dating its origin so far back as the first years of the revolutionary war, intermitted but once, and ending in three successive attempts to undermine his position as a candidate for the chief official posts of the country, only the last of which proved effective, is now rendered apparent even by the incomplete publication that has been lately made of Hamilton's papers. It was not, however, until the death of General Washington, that the avowed disinclination of Mr. Adams further to pursue the war policy with France, and to intrust to that gentleman the chief command of the army, led to an open declaration of enmity. The pamphlet then composed by him, entitled, "The public conduct and character of John Adams, Esquire, President of the United States," was unquestionably intended to destroy Mr. Adams's chance of reëlection, at all hazards, although it was found necessary to apologize for the act to the great body of the federal party, whom it was sure simultaneously to destroy, by giving it the shape of a secret effort to turn the scale in the House of Representatives in favor of Mr. C. C. Pinckney, likewise a federalist, over Mr. Adams, which two gentlemen were to be brought there upon an electoral majority exactly equal. Any other construction than this impeaches Mr. Hamilton's political sagacity and foresight too much to be admissible. It is scarcely to be imagined that such a document, once put into a printer's hands, could fail to escape the lynx eyes of the hostile politicians of New York, headed by a man so acute as Aaron Burr. In addition, it may be shown that Mr. Hamilton had taken the trouble personally to reconnoitre beforehand the ground in New England, whereby he became convinced that the scheme of an equal vote for Mr. Pinckney was not likely to succeed, and that immediately upon his return he avowed publication as a part of his design.[1] That he did not persevere in this, was owing to the suggestions of his political friends rather than to his own inclination.

[1] Hamilton to Wolcott. 3d August. *Works*, vol. vi. p. 450. The same to Bayard, p. 452.

As it was, the pamphlet appeared surreptitiously, whilst Mr. Adams was President, and when he could take no notice of it without materially compromising the dignity of his position. But after his term expired in March, 1801, it seems that he addressed himself to the labor of a reply, and prepared the materials which he designed to use. The reason why he did not perfect his design, is nowhere explained. Possibly it might have grown out of the condition of things consequent upon Mr. Jefferson's accession to the Presidency, which furnished little chance for a favorable hearing in any quarter. Perhaps it may have been owing to the fall of Mr. Hamilton. A large portion of the federal party, which he had represented, was giving in its adhesion to Mr. Jefferson, whilst the rest was dwindling down to a fragment in the northern and eastern States, exclusively under the guidance of those individuals with whom he had come to a rupture, in sentiment if not in action, during his own administration. The new policy these persons were pursuing was one with which he could as little sympathize as with the old one. Yet he preserved total silence until attacks were revived upon him, and upon his son John Quincy Adams, on account of opinions expressed upon later questions. It happened that in 1809, an extract from the Baltimore Federal Republican, met his eye, in which, among other things, the old charges were repeated against him for instituting the mission of 1799 to France, the gravest article in the pamphlet of Mr. Hamilton; and this led to an extended publication of documents and reasonings in the columns of the Boston Patriot, touching a large part of his public career, but a portion of which is to be found collected in the volume, entitled "Correspondence of the late President Adams," published in Boston the same year.

For reasons already given, it has been deemed unadvisable to reprint these materials as they appear in the Patriot. Two separate extracts, complete in themselves, are now given. The first is confined to Mr. Adams's defence of himself against Mr. Hamilton's attack. This step is made necessary by the republication of that pamphlet in the works of that gentleman. It is proper to state that, although written in 1809, the substantial facts were drawn from the fragments prepared in 1801. This is to be kept in mind, the more because Mr. Gibbs, in his late work, has endeavored to do, what none of the persons alluded to ever attempted in their lifetime, — dispute the accuracy of the narrative, as if composed merely from the impaired recollection of a later period.

It is true that, in a few particulars, incidental additions are made, which show haste in the preparation of the later production, as well as inattention to the exact order of the details; but these errors will not be found to affect the force of the facts, or of the argument, in any essential point. Whatever they are, it is believed they are all mentioned and corrected in the notes. Such portions of the materials prepared in 1801, as are deemed useful to compare with the text, are also appended, together with references to any passages elsewhere in this work, and in other works, that appear to furnish light upon this obscure and disputed portion of American history. An endeavor has been made to strip the consideration of the questions involved of all the acrimony that originally attached to them, and to confine the comments as much as possible to a simple elucidation of the facts.

The second extract embraces an examination of a question of a different nature, and connected with a later period of American politics.

LETTER I.

I was glad to see in your paper of the 7th of this month the extract from the *Baltimore Federal Republican*, for many reasons, which may be explained in due time. One or two may be stated now.

1. I was pleased with the candid acknowledgment, that "Mr. Adams never was a favorite with the *leading men* of the federal party." The words *leading men* will require some explanation, and some limitations and restrictions which may hereafter appear. But, in general, this is a truth which I have known for twenty years, though it has never been publicly avowed, to my knowledge, till now.

2. I am happy to see, what I consider as an acknowledgment, that my unpardonable sin against the federal party, or rather against those *leading men*, was the peace with France in 1800 — an event which has given this country eight years of its most splendid prosperity. The writer mentions the mission to France in 1799, as a measure which brought odium and ridicule on my administration. If you will allow me a little room in your Patriot, I may hereafter produce proofs to the satisfaction of the public, that this measure was neither odious nor ridiculous. At this time I will only send you a communication from General Washington, by which it will appear that the subject was not seen by that great ornament of his country in the same light in which this writer sees it.[1]

. . . . . .

The letter from Mr. Barlow, inclosed in General Washington's, is in these words.[2]

. . . . . .

Neither Mr. Barlow's letter nor General Washington's opinion would have influenced me to nominate a minister, if I had not received abundant assurances to the same effect from regular

[1] Here follows a letter of General Washington, which is now omitted, as it can be readily found in Mr. Sparks's edition of his writings. Vol. xi. p. 399.

[2] Mr. Barlow's letter is printed in Sparks's *Washington*, vol. xi. Appendix, p. 560.

diplomatic sources.[1] I, however, considered General Washington's question, whether Mr. Barlow's was written with a very good or a very bad design; and as, with all my jealousy, I had not sagacity enough to discover the smallest room for suspicion of any ill design, I frankly concluded that it was written with a very good one.

From General Washington's letter it appears, 1st. That it was his opinion that the restoration of peace upon just, honorable, and dignified terms was the ardent desire of all the friends of this rising empire. 2d. That he thought negotiation might be brought on upon open, fair, and honorable ground. 3d. That he was so desirous of peace, that he was willing to enter into correspondence with Mr. Barlow, a private gentleman, without any visible credentials or public character, or responsibility to either government, in order to bring on a public negotiation. General Washington, therefore, could not consider the negotiation odious.

II.

The institution of an embassy to France, in 1799, was made upon principle, and in conformity to a system of foreign affairs, formed upon long deliberation, established in my mind, and amply opened, explained, and supported in Congress, — that is, a system of eternal neutrality, if possible, in all the wars of Europe, — at least eighteen years before President Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality, in 1794. For the truth of the antiquity of this system, I appeal to Judge Chase, who made the first motion in Congress for entering into foreign relations. This motion was made in concert with me, and was seconded by me. If I am incorrect in any circumstance, that gentleman can set me right. And here I feel a pride in acknowledging that perhaps no two members of Congress were at that time upon more intimate terms. We flickered, disputed, and wrangled in public and private, but always with a species of good humor that never was suffered to diminish the confidence, esteem, or affection of either in the other. I have long wished for a fair opportunity of transmitting to posterity my humble testimony

[1] Mr. Adams's answer to General Washington is printed in this work. Vol. viii. p. 624.

to the virtues and talents of that able and upright magistrate and statesman.

Our system was, to form treaties of commerce with France, Spain, Holland, and all the other nations of Europe, even with England herself, upon a footing of entire equality; but by no means to form any political or military connections with any power in Europe, or engage in any hostilities against any, unless driven to them by necessity to support our independence and honor, or our just and necessary interests. In what manner and by whose means this plan has ever been abandoned in any degree, I could detail from step to step, but it would require a volume, and is not necessary here. It has never been forgotten by me; but the rectitude and wisdom of it has been confirmed by every year's and day's experience from 1776 to 1799, and indeed to 1809.

This introduction will be called pompous, no doubt, and it will be thought an astonishing instance of the bathos to descend from Judge Chase to Mr. Logan; but my plan requires it.

With this system clear in my head, and deeply impressed upon my heart, it was with the utmost reluctance that I found myself under a necessity, in 1798, of having recourse to hostilities against France. But the conduct of that government had been so unjust, arbitrary, and insolent, as to become intolerable. I therefore animated this nation to war, determined, however, to listen to every proposal, and embrace the first opportunity to restore peace, whenever it could be done consistently with the honor and interest of the country. In this spirit I gave all due attention and consideration to General Washington's and Mr. Barlow's letters; nor was I wholly inattentive to a multitude of other circumstances, some of which shall be mentioned.

Perhaps at no period of our connection with France has there ever been such a flood of private letters from that country to this as in the winter of 1798 and 1799. The contents of many of them were directly or indirectly communicated to me. They were all in a similar strain with that of Mr. Barlow, that the French government had changed their ground, and were sincerely disposed to negotiation and accommodation. I will instance only two. Mr. Codman, of Boston, wrote largely and explicitly to his friends to the same purpose; and his worthy brother, the late Mr. John Codman, of Boston, not only communicated to

me the substance of his brother's letters, but thanked me, in warm terms, for opening a negotiation; and added, that every true friend of this country, who was not poisoned with party spirit, would thank me for it and support me in it. Mr. Nathaniel Cutting, a consul in France under President Washington's appointment, and a sensible man, wrote almost as largely as Mr. Barlow, and to the same effect.

I shall conclude this letter with another anecdote. Mr. Logan, of Philadelphia, a gentleman of fortune and education, and certainly not destitute of abilities, who had for several years been a member of the legislature of Pennsylvania, and has since been a senator of the United States, though I knew he had been one of the old constitutional party in that State, and a zealous disciple of that democratical school, which has propagated many errors in America, and, perhaps, many tragical catastrophes in Europe, went to France, either with the pretext or the real design of improving his knowledge in agriculture, and seeing the practice of it in that country. I had no reason to believe him a corrupt character, or deficient in memory or veracity. After his return he called upon me, and in a polite and respectful manner informed me that he had been honored with conversations with Talleyrand, who had been well acquainted with me, and repeatedly entertained at my house, and now visited me at his request to express to me the desire of the Directory as well as his own, to accommodate all disputes with America, and to forget all that was past; to request me to send a minister from America, or to give credentials to some one already in Europe, to treat; and to assure me that my minister should be received, and all disputes accommodated, in a manner that would be satisfactory to me and my country. I knew the magical words, *Democrat* and *Jacobin*, were enough to destroy the credibility of any witness with some people. But not so with me. I saw marks of candor and sincerity in this relation, that convinced me of its truth.

But the testimonies of Mr. Codman, Mr. Cutting, Mr. Barlow, and Mr. Logan, and all other private communications, though they might convince my own mind, would have had no influence to dispose me to nominate a minister, if I had not received authentic, regular, official, diplomatic assurances, which may be sent you in another letter.

III.

From Mr. Murray, the American minister at the Hague, who had been appointed by President Washington, I received assurances from the French government similar to those in Mr. Barlow's letter and so many others. They were conveyed from the French Directory to Mr. Pichon, secretary of the legation and *chargé des affaires* of the French republic near the Batavian republic, in the absence of the French ambassador, by him officially communicated to Mr. Murray, and by him to the Executive of the United States. The communication was in these words.[1]

. . . . . .

This letter was transmitted by Mr. Murray to the American government, and I own I am not acquainted with any words, either in the French or English language, which could have expressed in a more solemn, a more explicit, or a more decided manner, assurances of all that I had demanded as conditions of negotiation. How could I get rid of it with honor, or even without infamy? If ever there was a regular diplomatic communication, this was one. The diplomatic organs were all perfect and complete. Mr. Pichon was well known at Philadelphia, where he had resided some years in a public employment in the family of the French ambassador, as a respectable man and a man of letters. He was now secretary of legation, held a commission from his sovereign as much as a minister plenipotentiary; and every secretary of legation in the absence of his principal minister, is, of course, *chargé des affaires;* and the acts of a *chargé des affaires* are as official, as legal, and authentic, as those of an ambassador extraordinary.

In what other manner could Mr. Talleyrand have transmitted the assurances demanded? He had communicated them to Mr. Gerry, but was desirous of sending them by another way, that he might increase the chances of their arrival. At war with England, he could not send them to Mr. King. If he had sent them to Madrid, to Colonel Humphreys, there was no probability of their arriving in America so soon as through Holland.

[1] This communication has been already printed in this work, in its connection with the letters of Mr Murray. Vol. viii. Appendix, p. 690.

If he had sent them to Berlin, to Mr. Adams, the course would have been still more circuitous, and the probability much greater of long delay and uncertain arrival. If he had sent them to Mr. Smith, at Lisbon, there would have been the same difficulties. Of all the diplomatic organs, therefore, in Europe, he chose the best, the shortest, the safest, and the most certain.

Mr. Gerry's letter to the Secretary of State, dated Nantasket Road, October the 1st, 1798, confirmed these assurances beyond all doubt, in my mind, and his conversations with me at my own house, in Quincy, if any thing further had been wanting, would have corroborated the whole. As I have not a copy of that gentleman's letter, if he should chance to read this paper, I ask the favor of him to publish copies of his letter and of Mr. Talleyrand's letters to him, and, if he pleases, to repeat the assurances he gave me in conversation.[1] This gentleman's merit in this transaction was very great. It has been treated like all his other sacrifices, services, and sufferings in the cause of his country.

If, with all this information, I had refused to institute a negotiation, or had not persevered in it after it was instituted, I should have been degraded in my own estimation as a man of honor; I should have disgraced the nation I represented, in their own opinion and in the judgment of all Europe.

[1] Note by Mr. Gerry: "The 'assurances' to which Mr. Adams has referred as having been imparted to him in conversation by Mr. Gerry, are presumed by the latter to have reference to those which the French Directory made to him by their minister, Mr. Talleyrand, and by confidential persons, after the departure of the other envoys. They were expressed in the strongest terms to evince the disposition of the Directory for accommodating all subjects of difference between the two republics; for accrediting any minister or ministers which should thereafter have been sent by the United States, immediately on the presentment of their letters of credence; for adopting a commercial treaty that should be liberal and beneficial to the said States; and for making effectual arrangements to discharge the numerous and just demands of American citizens on the French republic. Indeed, the 'assurances' were such as that any departure from them must have forfeited any subsequent claim of credit on the part of the French republic."

Mr. Gerry further published in the Boston Patriot, extracts from his papers, which make a part of the volume from which the text is taken. At that time they were not readily accessible elsewhere. But they are now omitted, on account of the space they would occupy. They may be found in Wait's *State Papers*, as follows; viz.:

1. E. Gerry to C. M. Talleyrand, 1 October, 1798, vol. iv. pp. 154–169.
2. C. M. Talleyrand to E. Gerry, 22 July, 1798, pp. 220–221.
3. The same to the same, 3 August, 1798, p. 222.
4. Substance of a conference with the Dutch minister, 25 July, 1798, p. 228.

IV.

When I had received that authentic act of the sovereign authority of France, a copy of which is inserted in my last letter to you, communicated by their Secretary of State, through their secretary of legation and *chargé des affaires*, and our minister at the Hague, fully complying with all my requisitions, upon mature deliberation I determined to nominate a minister to France. Some of the communications from France had been accompanied with intimations concerning the characters proper to be employed, which I thought exceptionable, and that they might be made a pretext for again rejecting a minister. I considered, moreover, that France was an undulating ocean in a violent storm; party had exterminated party, and constitution had succeeded constitution, as billow rolls and roars, froths and foams after billow in the Gulf Stream. I knew that in the nature of things an executive authority in five persons could not last long in France or anywhere else; and we were already informed that the Directory was divided into parties, three against two, and that the majority in the legislative assembly adhered to the two, and the minority to the three. A revolution then was to be expected, and the new government might not feel themselves bound by the assurances given by their predecessors. To avoid the possibility of these inconveniences, I provided as cautiously and effectually against them as I could, in my message to the Senate, which never has been published. If this message had been made public, with its contents — the public despatch from France — I have confidence enough in the candor of the nation to believe that it would have obviated many a silly and many a malicious criticism. It was in these words.[1]

. . . . . .

In this manner effectual provision was made against any and every possible insidious use of the insinuations concerning characters proper to be employed, and who would be likely to succeed. In this manner, also, provision was made against the possible, and indeed highly probable and fully expected revolution, in the French government. Mr. Murray was not to advance

[1] For this message, see p. 162 of this volume.

a step towards Paris from the Hague, until after he should have received from the French government, whatever it might be, a repetition of assurances, officially communicated, that he in person should be received.

When this message was received in the Senate, it was postponed, as the greatest part of the executive business usually was, for consideration.[1] A great clamor was raised among the members of the House of Representatives, and out of doors, and an abundance of squibs, scoffs, and sarcasms, in what were then called the federal newspapers, particularly Cobbett's Porcupine and John Ward Fenno's United States Gazette. And by whom were these written? As I was informed, by Macdonald, the Scottish British commissioner for adjusting the claims of British creditors, and by William Smith, the British agent for claimants before that board of commissioners, of whom Macdonald was one. There were other writers besides these; but I will not condescend to name any others at present. It was given out that John Ward Fenno was the writer of the most important of them, and he was represented as a masterly writer, possessed of a most eloquent pen. *But the pen was not his.*

This was not all. Something much more serious to me soon took place. A committee of the Senate called upon me, whether appointed on record or whether by private concert, I know not. I was distressed, because I thought the procedure unconstitutional. However, I was determined that not one disrespectful word should escape me concerning the Senate or any member of it, and to that resolution I carefully adhered; and in relating the conference with those honorable gentlemen, which shall appear in my next letter, the same decorum shall be observed.

V.

The gentlemen of the Senate informed me, that they came to confer with me on the subject of the nomination of Mr. Murray to France; that there was a considerable dissatisfaction with it, and they desired to know for what reasons I had pre-

[1] It was postponed partly to gain time to write to Mr. Hamilton. See the letters that passed between Mr. Sedgwick and Mr. Hamilton. The latter suggesting the enlargement of the mission. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 396 – 397.

ferred Mr. Murray to so many others abroad and at home. My answer to the gentlemen was, that I thought Mr. Murray a gentleman of talents, address, and literature, as well as of great worth and honor, every way well qualified for the service, and fully adequate to all that I should require of him, which would be a strict compliance with his instructions, which I should take care to provide for him, on all points, in terms that he could not misunderstand. That my motives for nominating him in preference to others, were simply because the invitation from the French government had been transmitted through him, and because he was so near to Paris that he might be there in three or four days, and because his appointment would cause a very trifling additional expense.

They then inquired, why I had not nominated Mr. King. I answered that, if Mr. King had been in Holland, I certainly should not have thought of any other character. But he was our ambassador in England, then at war with France, and it would be considered by France as an insult to send them an ambassador, who, as soon as he had accomplished his business, was to return to England and carry with him all the information he might have collected in Paris. That the French government would suspect me of a design to send them a spy for the Court of St. James. That I presumed Mr. King at that time would not be pleased to be removed from England to France for perpetuity or permanence. Besides, that the difficulty of communication between England and France would necessarily occasion an indefinite delay in procuring the necessary passports, and that much depended upon the promptitude and despatch with which the negotiation should be conducted.

The gentlemen asked, why I had not nominated our minister plenipotentiary at Berlin. Neither the remarks with which they accompanied this question, nor the reasons which I gave them in answer, need to be detailed to the public.

I added, "Gentlemen, I maturely considered all these things before I nominated Mr. Murray; and I considered another gentleman, whom you have not mentioned, Mr. Humphreys, at Madrid; but the same objections of distance and delay account in his case as well as that of Mr. Adams." The gentlemen all agreed that there would have been no advantage in nominating him, more than Mr. Murray.

The gentlemen then inquired, why I had not nominated a commission of three or five, in preference to a single gentleman. The answer was, that I had had a long experience of ten years in this kind of business, had often acted in commissions with various other gentlemen, and I had three times been commissioned alone; that I had found in general that business could be better done by one than by many, in much less time and with much less perplexity; that the business to be done by Mr. Murray would be nothing more than obedience to his instructions, and that would be performed as well by one as by three; that the delay must be great in sending gentlemen from America, and the expense greatly augmented; that very much depended upon the celerity of the enterprise.

The gentlemen thought that a commission would be more satisfactory to the Senate and to the public. I said, although this was not perfectly consonant to my own opinion, I could in such a case easily give up my own to the public; and if they advised it, I would send another message, and nominate a commission of three; but Mr. Murray would be one, for after having brought his name before the public, I never would disgrace him by leaving him out. The gentlemen acquiesced, and one of them, whom I took to be their chairman, was pleased to say, "after this very enlightened explanation of the whole business, I am perfectly satisfied."[1] The others appeared to acquiesce, and took their leave. The next morning I sent another message, which shall appear in my next letter.

V.

The message mentioned in my last letter was in these words.[2]

[1] The committee consisted of Messrs. Sedgwick, Bingham, Ross, Read, and Stockton, all federalists. If the first named is the one alluded to in the text, his own account, written to Mr. Hamilton, of this conference, which took place on Saturday evening, varies in regard to his expression of satisfaction, as well as in other particulars. He says, that Mr. Adams felt it his duty to insist upon the Senate's action on the nomination of Mr. Murray. And in case of a rejection, he would then propose the commission of three. In consequence of this, a meeting of federal senators was held at the house of Mr. Bingham, probably on Sunday evening, the 24th of February, at which it was determined to reject the nomination. The commission of three was nominated in a message sent on Monday morning. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 399.

[2] See page 163 of this volume for this message.

To these nominations the Senate advised and consented, and commissions were prepared. My friend, Mr. Henry, declined on account of his age, and Governor Davie, of North Carolina, was appointed in his place. During all this transaction, no motion was made in the Senate to pass a resolution that a mission to France was inexpedient. With the despatches from Talleyrand before his eyes, I believe no member of the Senate would have been willing to record his name in favor of such a resolution, among the yeas and nays. The deputation of senators made no remonstrances to me against the mission, or the diplomatic communications on which it was founded, but only against the missionary, Mr. Murray.[1]

I sent an invitation to the heads of departments to assemble in my chamber, to consult upon the instructions to be given to our envoys. They all met me accordingly, and, in several long evenings,[2] entered into a very serious and deliberate discussion of every article that was to be demanded and insisted on in the proposed treaty. They were all unanimously agreed upon to my entire satisfaction, and reduced to writing. I committed them to the Secretary of State to be reduced into proper form, to have a fair copy made and transmitted to me for revision, correction, or signature, as there might be occasion.

The yellow fever was expected, and we were all obliged to fly for our lives: myself and all my family to Quincy, and the heads of departments, with the public offices, to Trenton.[3]

I had repeatedly endeavored to impress upon the mind of the Secretary of State the necessity of transmitting to me as soon as possible his draught of the instructions, that they might be finished and signed, and every thing prepared for the departure of the envoys. I waited with much concern, expecting from day to day to receive the instructions; but no instructions

[1] Mr. Sedgwick's first letter is a curious specimen of the perplexity into which a political partisan will sometimes be thrown, by a measure, the bearings of which he has not taken time to understand. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 396.

[2] A slight error. The fact is correctly stated in the original fragment. There was one evening and one morning consultation. On the 10th of March the points were fully discussed. They were reduced to writing, and finally agreed upon the next day — the 11th — the same day on which Mr. Adams left Philadelphia. See the points as finally transmitted, in vol. viii. p. 627.

[3] The offices were moved to Trenton in the latter part of August. The difference is slight, but Mr. Gibbs seems to think it material. Mr. Pickering assigns it as a cause of the delay of the instructions. See page 23 of this volume. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 272.

appeared. At length, instead of them I received a letter signed by all five of the heads of departments, earnestly entreating me to *suspend the mission!* [1]

I was astonished at this unexpected, this obstinate and persevering opposition to a measure that appeared so clearly to me to be so essential to the peace and prosperity of the nation, and the honor of the government, at home and abroad. I was not a little surprised at the unanimity of the heads of departments, for two of them had always appeared moderate and candid in relation to this mission. My instantaneous determination was to go to Trenton, meet the gentlemen face to face, to confer with them coolly on the subject, and convince them, or be convinced by them, if I could. On my way, I called upon Chief Justice Ellsworth, at his seat in Windsor, and had a conversation of perhaps two hours [2] with him. He was perfectly candid. Whatever should be the determination, he was ready at an hour's warning to comply. If it was thought best to embark immediately, he was ready. If it was judged more expedient to postpone it for a little time, though that might subject him to a winter voyage, that danger had no weight with him. If it was concluded to defer it till the spring, he was willing to wait. In this disposition I took leave of him. He gave me no intimation that he had any thought of a journey to Trenton.[3] I lodged at Hartford, not yet purified of the yellow fever, and there I caught something very like it, or at least almost as bad, a most violent cold, attended with a constant fever, which rendered me for six weeks more fit for a chamber and bed of sickness than for uncomfortable journeys, or much labor of the head or hands. However, I would not consent to be retarded on my journey,

[1] This is not quite accurate. The instructions were sent on the 10th of September and received on the 14th. The letter referred to was dated the 11th, and signed by Mr. Pickering only, but it had been approved by Messrs. Wolcott and McHenry, and concurred in by Mr. Stoddert. It was received on the 17th at night. Mr. Lee, as is stated a few lines below, was not at Trenton at the time; and he did not agree to the sentiments. It is curious that Mr. Hamilton, in his pamphlet, likewise calls the letter *a joint letter of the ministers*. It certainly was so regarded by those of them from whom he had his information. pp. 28 and 31 of this volume.

[2] This was on October 3d. Mr. Ellsworth, in a letter written, probably to Mr. Pickering, on the 5th October, says *half an hour*, according to Mr. Gibbs, but the letter is not given. The original draught says, "a long conversation." Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. p. 267.

[3] See his own letter, written the same day, 5th October, p. 37 of this volume.

and reacned Trenton, where Mr. Hamilton had arrived a few hours before me. Governor Davie had been there some time. Ill as I was, I sent for the heads of departments. Four of them were there. The Attorney-General was gone to Virginia. Many days[1] were employed in conferences with them, sometimes at my own apartments, and sometimes at their offices.

The inhabitants of Trenton had been wrought up to a pitch of political enthusiasm that surprised me. The universal opinion appeared to be, that the first arrivals from Europe would bring the glorious news that Louis the XVIII. was restored to the throne of France, and reigning triumphantly at Versailles. Suwarrow, at the head of his victorious Russian army, was to have marched from Italy to Paris on one side, and Prince Charles, at the head of an Austrian army, was to have marched from Germany to Paris on the other, and detachments from both armies were to march down to Havre to receive the king, who was to be brought over by a British fleet and escorted with flying colors to Versailles. I could scarcely believe my own senses, when I heard such reveries. Yet the heads of departments appeared to believe them, and urge them as decisive arguments for suspending the embarkation of our envoys till the spring. In vain did I urge the immense distances the two imperial armies had to march, the great number of towns and cities in the route of both, in positions chosen with great skill, fortified with exquisite art, defended by vast trains of heavy ordnance, garrisoned by numerous troops of soldiers perfectly disciplined, and animated with all the obstinacy and ardor of the revolutionary spirit. In vain did I allege the military maxim, which would certainly govern both Prince Charles and Suwarrow, that is, *never to leave a fortified city in the rear of your army, in possession of your enemy;* that the siege of one town would consume the whole season; that neither the Russians nor Austrians were, probably, provided with the mortars and heavy cannon necessary for sieges. Nothing would do — Louis XVIII. must be upon the throne of France. "Well, suppose he is, what harm will there be in embarking our envoys? They will congratulate his Majesty, and if his Majesty cannot receive them under their credentials to the French republic, he

[1] Six days. From the 10th to the 15th October, inclusive.

will be glad to see them in his kingdom, and assure them of his royal protection till they can write home for fresh commissions, and such shall be ready for them at a minute's warning." In vain did I urge the entire change of property in France, and the necessity the present possessors were under to defend themselves at every sacrifice and every risk. Mr. Ellsworth had arrived in two or three days after me. I invited him and Governor Davie to dine with me alone, that we might converse with entire freedom. At table, Mr. Ellsworth expressed an opinion somewhat similar to that of the heads of departments and the public opinion at Trenton. "Is it possible, Chief Justice," said I, "that you can seriously believe that the Bourbons are, or will be soon, restored to the throne of France?" "Why," said Mr. Ellsworth, smiling, "*it looks a good deal so.*" "I should not be afraid to stake my life upon it, that they will not be restored in seven years, if they ever are," was my reply. And then I entered into a long detail of my reasons for this opinion. They would be too tedious to enumerate here, and time has superseded the necessity of them.

The result of the conversation was, that Mr. Davie was decidedly for embarking immediately, as he always had been from his first arrival, and Mr. Ellsworth declared himself satisfied, and willing to embark as soon as I pleased.[1]

Mr. Hamilton, who had been some time in town, and had visited me several times, came at last to remonstrate against the mission to France. I received him with great civility, as I always had done from my first knowledge of him. I was fortunately in a very happy temper, and very good humor. He went over the whole ground of the victories of Suwarrow and Prince Charles, and the inflexible determination of the two imperial courts, in concert with Great Britain, to restore the house of Bourbon to their kingdom. That there was no doubt the enterprise was already accomplished, or at least would be, before the end of the campaign. That Mr. Pitt was determined to restore the Bourbons. That the confidence of the nation in

[1] Mr. Ellsworth seems to have immediately reported this conversation to Mr. Pickering and Mr. Wolcott. Mr. Pickering gives a sketch of it in a letter to General Washington, of the 24th October, published in Mr. Gibbs's *Work*, vol. ii. p. 280. He says that he "desired Mr. Wolcott to commit the whole recital to writing, *which he promised to do.*" No such paper appears in that work. Certainly it was a singular occupation for cabinet ministers.

Mr. Pitt was unbounded. That the nation was never so united and determined to support Mr. Pitt and his resolution to restore the monarchy of France. His eloquence and vehemence wrought the little man up to a degree of heat and effervescence like that which General Knox used to describe of his conduct in the battle of Monmouth, and which General Lee used to call his *paroxysms* of bravery, but which he said would never be of any service to his country. I answered him in general, as I had answered the heads of departments and Judge Ellsworth, but to no purpose. He repeated over and over again the unalterable resolution of Mr. Pitt and the two imperial courts, the invincible heroism of Suwarrow and Prince Charles, and the unbounded confidence of the British empire in Mr. Pitt, with such agitation and violent action that I really pitied him, instead of being displeased. I only added, that I differed with him in opinion on every point; and that instead of restoring the Bourbons, it would not be long before England would make peace. I treated him throughout with great mildness and civility; but, after he took leave, I could not help reflecting in my own mind on the total ignorance he had betrayed of every thing in Europe, in France, England, and elsewhere. Instead of that unbounded confidence in Mr. Pitt, I knew that the nation had been long working up almost to a ripeness for rebellion against Mr. Pitt, for continuing the war. Accordingly, it was not long before Mr. Pitt was obliged to resign, peace at Amiens was made, and Napoleon acknowledged. Mr. Hamilton, in his most famous pamphlet, has hinted at this conversation, and squinted at my simplicity for expecting peace.

Under the whole, I directed the instructions to be prepared, the heads of departments were assembled, and the instructions deliberately considered, paragraph by paragraph, and unanimously approved by me and by them. Indeed, there had never been any difference of opinion among us on any article of the instructions.[1]

[1] Mr. Gibbs, in his work, affirms that the dinner, and the conversation with Mr. Hamilton, took place after the preparation of the instructions, and after the order to embark was given. Perhaps it may be as well to compare with this account the fuller one given in 1801.

"At Trenton, the form of instructions was adjusted with Mr. Adams's ministers, and, had he wavered and been in doubt about the expediency of sending on his ministers, he would probably have asked advice; but he was not in doubt. On his

The instructions were presented to the envoys, and they were requested to embark in the United States frigate as soon as possible. For some cause or other in the state of the ship, they landed in Spain, and went by land from Corunna to Paris, on the same route which Mr. Dana and I had travelled twenty years before, that is, in 1780. Before their arrival, a revolution had occurred, and the consular government succeeded the Directory.

Had Mr. Murray's nomination been approved, he would probably have finished the business long before, and obtained compensation for all spoliations.

In my next letter you will have the evidence of the compliance of the French government with the conditions and requisitions in my message to the Senate, nominating Mr. Murray and others, ministers and envoys to France.

journey he had called on Mr. Ellsworth at his seat in Windsor, and had a long conversation with him upon the subject, and heard, as he believed, all the reasons for the suspending the sailing of the envoys for a few weeks. To do justice, however, to Mr. Ellsworth, he did not appear decided in his opinion against proceeding. When at Trenton, Mr. Adams had opportunities of knowing from one and another of his ministers all the reasons they ever suggested against the mission proceeding. He thought them insufficient. He conversed with Mr. Davie, who had been and continued steady in the opinion that they ought to proceed, and declared that, in his opinion, the nation, and that part of it, especially, with which he was best acquainted, expected they would proceed, and would be greatly disappointed if they did not. The change in the Directory appeared to the President to be a mere quibble, too much like an attorney's plea in abatement, when gravely alleged as a reason for suspending the mission. The expected annihilation of the republic, and restoration of the royal family, appeared extravagant, visionary, and in the highest degree improbable; but, if it had been certain, it was no reason for suspending the mission, for the mission was to France, not to individuals or forms of government. The reasons he urged in conversation with some, if not all his ministers, and with Messrs. Ellsworth and Davie, in support of his opinion that the republic would last several years, at least, and that the restoration of the royal family could not be soon effected, would take up too much time to detail. It appeared to him, that his ministers, three of them at least, had not sufficiently considered the state of Europe, the instability of coalitions among jealous rival powers, and, above all, the nature of twenty-five millions of people in a mass, whose deepest passions were thoroughly aroused and become wholly desperate. Nothing shall be said of the temper in which three of his ministers were, nor of the conduct of one or two of them, at least, from the first nomination of Mr. Murray, in endeavoring by conversations and letters to make the measure unpopular, and to injure the character of the President. There are persons who might say more. No step was ever more deliberately taken, after a full and dispassionate consideration of the whole subject, than the request to the envoys to sail by the 1st of November."

VII.

On the 6th of March, a letter was written by the Secretary of State by my order, in the following words, to Mr. Murray:

No. 22. Philadelphia, 6 March, 1799.

Sir, — "I inclose a commission constituting you, in conjunction with the Chief Justice Ellsworth and Patrick Henry, Esq., of Virginia, envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to the French republic. By the President's direction, I inclose for your information copies of his messages to the Senate, of the 18th and 25th of March" (it should have been the 18th and 25th of February), "by the latter of which you will see the motives inducing the nomination of a *commission* for the purpose of negotiating with France, instead of resting the business wholly with you. This will, doubtless, be agreeable, by relieving you from the weight of a sole responsibility in an affair of such magnitude.

It is the President's desire, that you, by letter to the French minister of foreign relations, inform him, "that Oliver Ellsworth, Chief Justice of the United States, Patrick Henry, late Governor of Virginia, and yourself, are appointed envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary of the United States to the French republic, with full powers to discuss and settle by a treaty all controversies between the United States and France." But, "that the two former will not embark for Europe until they shall have received from the Executive Directory direct and unequivocal assurances, signified by their secretary of foreign relations, that the envoys shall be received in character, to an audience of the Directory, and that they shall enjoy all the prerogatives attached to that character by the law of nations, and that a minister or ministers of equal powers shall be appointed and commissioned to treat with them."

The answer you shall receive to your letter, you will be pleased to transmit to this office.

You will also be pleased to understand it to be the President's opinion, that no more indirect and inofficial communications, written or verbal, should be held with any persons whatever, agents on behalf of France, on the subjects of difference between the United States and the French republic. If the French

government really desire a settlement of the existing differences, it must take the course pointed out, unless the Executive Directory should prefer sending a minister plenipotentiary to the United States.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant."

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Mr. Murray obeyed these instructions by a letter in these words: —

W. V. MURRAY TO C. M. TALLEYRAND.

The Hague, 5 May, 1799.

CITIZEN MINISTER,

It is with the greatest pleasure that I hasten to fulfil the instructions, which I have just had the honor to receive from the government of the United States of America, by informing you that the President has appointed Oliver Ellsworth, Chief Justice of the United States, Patrick Henry, late Governor of Virginia, and William Vans Murray, minister resident of the United States at the Hague, to be envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary of the United States to the French republic, with full powers to discuss and settle by a treaty all controversies between the United States and France; but that the two former, Mr. Ellsworth and Mr. Henry, will not embark for Europe until they shall have received from the Executive Directory direct and unequivocal assurances, signified by their minister of foreign relations, that the envoys shall be received in character to an audience of the Directory, and that they shall enjoy all the prerogatives attached to that character by the law of nations, and that a minister or ministers of equal powers shall be appointed and commissioned to treat with them.

I request you, Citizen Minister, to lay this subject before your government, and as the distance is so great and the obstacles so numerous in an Atlantic voyage, that you will favor me, as speedily as possible, with the answer which is to lead to such happy and important consequences.

Accept, Citizen Minister, the assurances of my perfect high esteem.

W. V. MURRAY.

When Mr. Murray received the answer of the French minister, he inclosed it, with the following letter from himself, to the Secretary of State: —

No. 75. The Hague, 7 May, 1799.

Dear Sir,

On the 4th instant, late in the evening, I had the honor to receive your No. 22, containing the commission of envoys.

On the 5th, I addressed, precisely agreeably to your instructions, as I conceived, the inclosed letter to Mr. Talleyrand, the minister of exterior relations. You will perceive, Sir, that I did not think myself at liberty to go, not only not out of the commas, but beyond them. In one word alone I deviated, in the word *minister*, instead of Secretary of foreign relations. No direct nor indirect and inofficial communications, written or verbal, will be held by me with the French agents on American affairs.

I accept the appointment which it has pleased the President to clothe me with, under a grateful sense of the high honor conferred upon me, so unexpectedly, by this mark of his confidence. I may be allowed to say, that though I was deeply sensible of the honor conferred by the first nomination, and shall always, I hope, retain a most grateful recollection of it, yet, Sir, the new modification of that nomination gave me great pleasure, always conceiving, as I thought I did, that any negotiation with France would be full of anxieties and political perils to the envoys that should be employed by our government. I had no wishes to be engaged in it, and no expectation that I should be. To have a share in it, was by me unsought. You will excuse this declaration, because I was instrumental in certain preliminary steps relative *to the advances of France, which produced the basis of the appointment.*

I sent the original of the inclosed to Mr. Talleyrand by post; another, a copy, to Major Mountflorence, to be handed to him; a third to a Mr. Griffith for Major M. in case the other failed, to be opened by Mr. G., if Major M. should have been out of Paris, and directed Mr. G. to follow the instructions which he would find in the letter to Major M., which were, to deliver the inclosed to Mr. Talleyrand, and take his letter in answer for me, and send it to me.

As soon as I have the answer of the Directory, I shall have the honor of transmitting copies to you, Sir, by different ways.

I am, with the greatest respect and sincere esteem, dear Sir, faithfully your most obedient servant.

W. V. MURRAY.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERIOR RELATIONS TO W. VANS MURRAY.

(*Translation.*)

Paris, 23 Floréal, (12 May, 1799,)
7th year of the French republic, one and indivisible.

I augur too well, Sir, from the eagerness you display in fulfilling the instructions of your government, not to hasten to answer the letter I receive from you, dated the 16th of this month.

The Executive Directory being informed of the nomination of Mr. Oliver Ellsworth, of Mr. Patrick Henry, and of yourself, as envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary of the United States to the French republic, to discuss and terminate all differences which subsist between the two countries, sees with pleasure that its perseverance in pacific sentiments has kept open the way to an approaching reconciliation. It has a long time ago manifested its intentions with respect to this subject. Be pleased to transmit to your colleagues and accept yourself the frank and explicit assurance that it will receive the envoys of the United States in the official character with which they are invested, that they shall enjoy all the prerogatives which are attached to them by the law of nations, and that one or more ministers shall be authorized to treat with them.

It was certainly unnecessary to suffer so many months to elapse for the mere confirmation of what I have already declared to Mr. Gerry, and which, after his departure, I caused to be declared to you at the Hague. I sincerely regret that your two colleagues await this answer at such a distance. As to you, Sir, whom it will reach in a few days, and who understand so well the value of time, when the restoration of harmony between two republics, whom every thing invites to friendship, is in question, be assured that as soon as you can take in hand the object

of your mission, I shall have the honor immediately to send you passports.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my very sincere consideration.

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

The foregoing documents were not published till they were communicated to Congress, with my message of December 5th, 1799. The messages to the Senate, nominating the minister and the envoys, were never published till now, as I remember. I may be, however, mistaken. These papers were not published till the mischief was done that they might have prevented, and innumerable prejudices and errors propagated all over the nation.

I have omitted two facts, which ought to have been inserted in a former letter:

1. One is, that one of the heads of departments[1] at Trenton was more diffident than the rest. He said he was far from being sanguine. He had signed the letter to me, urging a postponement of the mission, because he did not like to be singular; but he wished me to decide the question according to my own judgment and sentiments. He also showed me a letter from the Attorney-General in Virginia,[2] saying that the people expected that the envoys should proceed, and would be disappointed if they did not.

2. Another fact is, that I transiently asked one of the heads of departments, whether Ellsworth and Hamilton came all the way from Windsor and Newark to Trenton, to convince me that I ought to suspend the mission.

VIII.

At first I intended to encumber your paper with no documents but such as were absolutely necessary for my own vindication. But as the peace with France in 1800, was not only an event of great importance in itself, but produced demonstrations of the prejudices, passions, views, designs, and systems of parties, more, perhaps, than any other, I hope you will allow

[1] Mr. Stoddert, Secretary of the Navy.

[2] Mr. Lee. The letter was addressed to Mr. Adams himself. See page 38.

me room for such other papers as may serve to throw light upon this subject. At present it may not be very interesting; but the cause of truth and justice may hereafter be promoted by having the facts and evidences laid together in a series. The future policy of the nation will not be injured by it.

Besides the communications already published from the sovereign of the French nation, through their minister of foreign relations, their diplomatic organ at the Hague, and our minister there, another was communicated through the same channels in these words: —

C. M. TALLEYRAND TO M. PICHON.

Paris, 11 Fructidor, an 6. (28 August, 1798.)

(*Translation.*)

I see with pleasure, citizen, that the intercourse of society has procured you some political conversations with Mr. Murray. I entertain an esteem for that minister. Like all the men at the head of the affairs of the United States, he has received the impressions which the British cabinet has known how to give against us. He thinks the measures of his government just, and supports them; but he possesses reason, understanding, and a true attachment to his country. He is neither French nor English; he is ingenuously an American. I am not at all surprised that he has appeared to you to wish sincerely for the reconciliation of the two republics. I will, therefore, cheerfully answer the questions you put to me on different points, which appeared to you not to be well established in his mind. I do not see between France and the United States any clashing of interest, any cause of jealousy. The Americans wish to be fishermen, sailors, manufacturers, and especially husbandmen. In all these points of view their success is more at the expense of England than us. Why should we be uneasy about them? They aspire to the consolidation of their national existence, and it is to our purpose that they should succeed. In fact, we should have decided upon very superficial views, to sustain their independence, if the matter was to separate them from England merely to leave them finally insulated among themselves, on an extensive sea-coast, weak, rivalling, and impoverished by each other, and torn by foreign intrigues. We

know that Great Britain would soon have put together, piece by piece, those scattered shreds, and we should have done nothing useful for ourselves, if so miserable a chance of it were not daily rendered more remote.

What, therefore, is the cause of the misunderstanding which, if France did not manifest herself more wise, would henceforth induce a violent rupture between the two republics? Neither incompatible interests nor projects of aggrandizement divide them. After all, distrust alone has done the whole. The government of the United States has thought that France wanted to revolutionize it. France has thought that the government of the United States wanted to throw itself into the arms of England. It does not require much skill to divine which is the cabinet interested in the two events producing each other, and which invisibly puts in motion all the expedients calculated to make them take effect. Let us open our eyes on both sides. I am disposed to admit that the conduct of the government of the United States may be explained by other causes than those heretofore presumed. But let it on its part understand that the French government, wounded as it may be, is too wise to entertain the views of disturbance, which the other supposes. It concerns a republic, founded on the system of representation, to support and not to weaken similar establishments. The stability of this system abroad is a necessary example at home. France, in fine, has a double motive as a nation and as a republic, not to expose to any hazard the present existence of the United States. Therefore it never thought of making war against them, nor exciting civil commotions among them; and every contrary supposition is an insult to common sense.

These fundamental principles being established, it is natural to ask by what fatality a good understanding was not long since restored. It was because irritation being mingled with distrust neither party yielded to real conciliatory inclinations. In the United States it was supposed that the French government was temporizing, in order to strike the blow with greater certainty, whence resulted a crowd of measures more and more aggravating. In France it was supposed that the government of the United States wished only the appearances of a negotiation, whence resulted *a certain demand for pledges of good faith.*

Let us substitute calmness for passion, confidence for suspi-

cions, and we shall soon agree. I used my endeavors to enter upon a negotiation in this spirit with Mr. Gerry. My correspondence with him until the day of his departure is a curious monument of advances on my part, and of evasions on his. It is wrong to think that I confined myself to vague protestations. Among that series of official letters, which will doubtless be published at Philadelphia, I select one of the 30th Prairial, wherein you will see that I make very positive propositions, without any mixture of preliminary conditions. This letter was followed by three notes upon the articles to be discussed, and I intended to complete the others in this manner, if Mr. Gerry had not refused to answer thereto.

When it became necessary to abandon the idea of treating with that envoy, who thought it important only to know how a negotiation might thereafter be resumed, I gave him the most solemn assurances concerning the reception that a new plenipotentiary would receive. It was far from my thoughts to insinuate that the President should send one from the United States, instead of investing with his powers some one who was in Europe; far less that the envoy should land directly in France, instead of announcing it in a neighboring country. I wished merely to say, that the Executive Directory was so decided for a reconciliation, that all tampering would be superfluous; that an act of confidence in it would excite its own. I should be very badly understood, if there should be found in my expressions a restriction on the nature of the choice which the President might make. I wished to encourage Mr. Gerry, by testimonies of regard that his good intentions merited. Although I could not dissemble that he wanted decision at a moment when he might have easily adjusted every thing, it does not thence follow that I designated him. I will even avow that I think him too irresolute to be fit to hasten the conclusion of an affair of this kind. The advantages that I prized in him are common to all Americans, who have not manifested a predilection for England. Can it be believed that a man who should profess a hatred or contempt of the French republic, or should manifest himself the advocate of royalty, can inspire the Directory with a favorable opinion of the dispositions of the government of the United States? I should have disguised the truth, if I had left this matter ambiguous. It is not wounding

the independence of that government, to point out to a sincere friend of peace the shoals he ought to avoid.

As to the mediation of the Batavian republic and of Spain, I do not know that there is any serious question about it, and it appears to me absolutely useless. The United States might hesitate, in the present state of things, to refer themselves to their impartiality; and, besides, I see no subject which may not be arranged directly.

I know that the distance which separates France and the United States opens a vast field for incidents, and there have been but too many of them. But the Executive Directory is unshaken in the conduct which may best obviate them. The excess even of provocations has deadened their effect. The government of the United States surrounds itself with precautions against an imaginary attack. To stretch the hand to deluded friends, is what one republic owes to another, and I cannot doubt that the dignity of that attitude will convince the President of our pacific dispositions.

The two governments ought above all to be attentive to indirect attempts to alienate them still more. Their prudence will secure this object, and I shall cite but one example of it. You have told Mr. Murray the truth respecting Dr. Logan. But I perceive that on all hands it is attempted to produce a belief in America that we are negotiating with him. On the 7th of this month a very insidious paragraph was inserted in the "*Bien Informé.*" It is therein intimated, that, guided by the citizen Thomas Paine, Dr. Logan has made application to the Executive Directory in the character of secret agent. The Doctor has complained of it bitterly to me. He has no need of justifying himself concerning a matter, the falsity of which I know better than anybody; but he assured me that having once met Thomas Paine, at the house of a third person, he found him so prejudiced against the United States, and so opinionative with respect to an influence he neither possesses among them nor us, that he abstained from conversing any more with him. Moreover, to cut short all misunderstanding, I engaged Dr. Logan to postpone till another time the experiments he proposes to make on agriculture, and to return home. As to Mr. Hichborn, of Massachusetts, I was even ignorant till now that he was in Europe. A single word will suffice for the rest.

We want nothing but justice on the part of the United States. We ask it, we offer it to their government. It may depend upon the candor of the Executive Directory.

You will not doubt, citizen, that I approve of the communication which your zeal has caused you to seek with Mr. Murray, since I enable you to resume it with official elucidations, &c., &c., &c.

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

This and all the other communications from the French minister, heretofore published in my letter to you, were produced by my message to Congress of the 21st of June, 1798, which was in these words:[1]

. . . . . .

IX.

Mr. Hamilton, in his famous pamphlet, says, "the conduct pursued bore sufficiently the marks of courage and elevation to raise the national character to an exalted height throughout Europe.

"Much is it to be deplored that we should have been precipitated from this proud eminence without necessity, without temptation."

It is the habitual practice of our parties to affirm or deny, as they find it to their purpose, the honor or the disgrace that is produced in Europe by our measures. But neither party know any thing about the matter. The truth is, that our affairs are much less spoken or thought of in Europe than we imagine. In all parts of Europe, but especially in France and England, they are constantly misrepresented and misunderstood; most of all in England. I will venture to say, that Mr. Hamilton wrote entirely at random, and without a glimmering of genuine information, when he mentioned both the exaltation and precipitation of our national character. To appeal to the courtiers or cabinet, or to the diplomatic corps in Europe, would be idle, because none of them will ever read Hamilton's pamphlet or

[1] See page 159 for this message, ending with the following words:
"*I will never send another minister to France without assurances that he will be received, respected, and honored as the representative of a great, free, powerful, and independent nation.*"

these papers; but I would not hesitate to submit the whole subject to any of them. I shall take another course. Chief Justice Ellsworth is no more. I can no longer appeal to him. If I could, I would say no more than the truth, but it would be more than I shall now say; and I aver that his representation to me was the direct reverse of Hamilton's dogmatical assertions. Governor Davie still lives, and to him I appeal with confidence. He declared to me that, to judge of the conduct of the American government, both in their naval and other preparations for war, and in their political and diplomatic negotiations upon that occasion, a man must go to Europe, where it was considered as the greatest demonstration of genius, firmness, and wisdom. If I represent the governor's expressions in stronger terms than those he used, I request him to correct them.

In England, I know the Anti-Jacobin journal abused us, and so did Macdonald, Cobbett, Smith, and every Briton in Europe and America, who wished us at war with France and in alliance with England. But even in England all the sober part of the nation applauded us, and that to such a degree, that it soon became a popular cry, "We must imitate the United States of America, change our ministers, and make peace." Accordingly, they did soon change their ministers, and make peace at Amiens.

Mr. Liston, whose character I respect, had run through a long course of diplomatic experience in various courts and countries in Europe, from a secretary of legation and *chargé des affaires* to the grade of minister plenipotentiary, and thence to that of ambassador at Constantinople, was probably a better judge than Mr. Hamilton, who had no experience at all in any diplomatic station, and who, I dare to say, had read very little on the subject of diplomatic functions, and still less of the history of embassies, or of the printed despatches of ambassadors. Mr. Liston, if anybody, knew what would procure honor to a nation or government, and what disgrace, what was triumph, and what humiliation.

Now I affirm, that the first time Mr. Liston saw me, after he had been informed of the communications of the French Directory through Talleyrand, Mr. Pichon, and Mr. Murray, he said to me these words: "*To what humiliations will not these Frenchmen stoop to appease you? I am very sorry for it; I own,*

I did hope they would have gone to war with you." I smiled, but made no answer. I wanted no proof of the sincerity of this declaration. I doubted not the sincerity of his wish more than I did that of Mr. Canning and his associates in the Anti-Jacobin, who, upon receiving the news of Mr. Murray's nomination, proclaimed that jacobinism was triumphant and carrying all before it in America. They could not, or would not, distinguish between jacobinism and neutrality. Every thing with them was jacobinism, except a war with France and an alliance with Great Britain. They all panted for a war between the United States and France as sincerely, though not so ardently, as Alexander Hamilton.

There were not wanting insinuations and instigations to me to confer with Mr. Liston on the subject of an alliance with Great Britain. And Mr. Liston himself repeatedly suggested to me, in very modest and delicate terms, however, his readiness to enter into any explanations on that head. I always waved it with as easy a politeness as I could. But my system was determined, and had been so for more than twenty years; that is, to enter into no alliance with any power in Europe. In case of war with England, I would not enter into any alliance with France. In case of war with France, I would not form any alliance with England. We want no alliance; we are equal to all our own necessary wars.

"*Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis,*
Tempus eget."

We might aid and be aided by a power at war with our enemy, and might concert operations from time to time; but I would make no engagement that should tie up our hands from making peace whenever we pleased. Had the war with France continued, I might have been drawn by the force of public opinion, or the influence of the legislature, into an alliance with England; but it would have been against my own judgment and inclination.

Let me conclude this letter with an anecdote. Dr. Franklin told me, that before his return to America from England, in 1775, he was in company, I believe at Lord Spencer's, with a number of English noblemen, when the conversation turned upon fables, those of Æsop, La Fontaine, Gay, Moore, &c., &c. Some one of the company observed that he thought the subject

was exhausted. He did not believe that any man could now find an animal, beast, bird, or fish, that he could work into a new fable with any success; and the whole company appeared to applaud the idea, except Franklin, who was silent. The gentleman insisted on his opinion. He said, with submission to their lordships, he believed the subject was inexhaustible, and that many new and instructive fables might be made out of such materials. Can you think of any one at present? If your lordship will furnish me a pen, ink, and paper, I believe I can furnish your lordship with one in a few minutes. The paper was brought, and he sat down and wrote: —

"Once upon a time, an eagle scaling round a farmer's barn, and espying a hare, darted down upon him like a sunbeam, seized him in his claws, and remounted with him in the air. He soon found that he had a creature of more courage and strength than a hare, for which, notwithstanding the keenness of his eyesight, he had mistaken a cat. The snarling and scrambling of the prey was very inconvenient, and, what was worse, she had disengaged herself from his talons, grasped his body with her four limbs, so as to stop his breath, and seized fast hold of his throat with her teeth. Pray, said the eagle, let go your hold, and I will release you. Very fine, said the cat, I have no fancy to fall from this height and be crushed to death. You have taken me up, and you shall stoop and let me down. The eagle thought it necessary to stoop accordingly."

The moral was so applicable to England and America, that the fable was allowed to be original, and highly applauded.

Let Hamilton say what he will, the French Directory found it convenient to stoop and set us down on our honest ground of neutrality and impartiality, as the English eagle did formerly, and now does a second time.

X.

Another of my crimes, according to my great accuser, was nominating Mr. Murray without previous consultation with any of my ministers. To this charge I shall say but little at present.

In England, the first magistrate is responsible for nothing,

his ministers for every thing. Here, according to the practice, if not the Constitution, the ministers are responsible for nothing, the President for every thing. He is made to answer before the people, not only for every thing done by his ministers, but even for all the acts of the legislature. Witness the alien and sedition laws. In all great and essential measures he is bound by his honor and his conscience, by his oath to the Constitution, as well as his responsibility to the public opinion of the nation, to act his own mature and unbiased judgment, though unfortunately, it may be in direct contradiction to the advice of all his ministers. This was my situation in more than one instance. It had been so in the nomination of Mr. Gerry; it was afterwards so in the pardon of Fries; two measures that I recollect with infinite satisfaction, and which will console me in my last hour.

In the case now in question I perfectly knew the sentiments of all my ministers. I knew every argument they could allege, and moreover, I knew the secret motives that governed them better than they did themselves. I knew them then and I know them now, believe it or disbelieve it who will, at the present time; hereafter, the world will be convinced of it.

I knew that if I called the heads of departments together and asked their advice, three of them would very laconically protest against the measure. The other two would be loath to dissent from their brethren, and would more modestly and mildly concur with them. The consequence would be, that the whole would be instantaneously communicated to A, B, C, D, E, F, &c., in the Senate, and G, H, I, &c., in the House of Representatives; the public and the presses would have it at once, and a clamor raised and a prejudice propagated against the measure, that would probably excite the Senate to put their negative on the whole plan. If I had called the heads of department together, and asked their advice, I knew from past experience[1]

[1] Compare with this the letter to the Secretary of State, of 20th October, 1798, vol. viii. p. 612, which seems never to have been answered. Also the directions to the same officer, 15th January, 1799, to prepare a plan of a treaty, vol. viii. p. 621, of which no notice whatever was taken. Likewise the draught of a passage to be put into the message of December, 1798, which was not adopted, p. 181, of this volume.

In a private letter to Mr. Adams, Mr. Stoddert protested against being included within the scope of this charge. He says:

"You had reason to believe that I did not hold, and never had held myself at liberty to oppose a measure of yours, and retain my office; and I strongly

that their answers would have been flat negatives. If I had asked their reasons, they would be such arguments as Hamilton has recorded; for he, it seems, was their recording secretary.

1. The etiquette which required, according to them, that France should send a minister to us.

2. That a negotiation with France would give offence to Great Britain and to Russia, and probably involve us in a war with these powers.

I had twenty times answered these arguments by saying, that there was no such etiquette. It was true that in ancient and more barbarous times, when nations had been inflamed by long wars, and the people wrought up to a degree of fury on both sides, so as to excite apprehensions that ambassadors would be insulted or massacred by the populace, or even imprisoned, as in Turkey, sovereigns had insisted that ambassadors should be exchanged, and that one should be held as a hostage for the other. It had even been insisted that a French ambassador should embark at Calais at the same hour that an English ambassador embarked at Dover. But these times were passed. Nations sent ambassadors now as they pleased. Franklin and his associates had been sent to France; Mr. Jay had been sent to Spain; I had been sent to Holland; Mr. Izard had been commissioned to Tuscany; Mr. W. Lee to Vienna and Berlin, without any stipulation for sending ministers in return. We had a minister in London three years, without any minister from England in return. We have had a minister at Berlin, without any from Prussia.

As to the offence that would be taken by Great Britain, I asked, shall we propose any thing to France, or agree to any thing inconsistent with our treaties and pledged faith with England? Certainly not. • What right has England, then, to be offended? Have we not as clear a right to make peace as she has? We are at war with France, at least in part. If Britain should make peace with France, what right have we

advised you, since the nomination of Mr. Murray was made, to adhere to it, expressing my conviction that the Senate would acquiesce. You were then determined to adhere; but afterwards, and perhaps more wisely, though I think at the expense of some personal dignity, made a modification of your message."

Mr. Adams, though well disposed to correct other things pointed out in the same letter, declined to modify this passage.

to complain, provided she stipulates nothing inconsistent with her treaty with us?

As to Russia, what has she to do with us, or we with her? I had confidence enough in the assurances given, firmly to believe that our envoys would be received and respected. Candidates enough were ready to run the risk, and Hamilton himself would have been very proud to have been one of them, if he had not been Commander-in-chief of the army.

I will acknowledge, that when the terror of the power and anger of Great Britain have been held up to me in a manner that appears to me to be base and servile, I sometimes was provoked to say, that in a just cause, when the essential character and interests of the United States should be wronged by Great Britain, I should hold her power in total contempt. It may be said, for it has been said, that this was imprudent, and that I was fretted. Let it be said by whom it will, I now repeat the same sentiment after the coolest reflection of ten years.

On the other hand, by making the nomination on my own authority, I believed that the heads of departments would have some discretion; and although I knew that the British faction would excite a clamor, and that some of the senators, representatives, and heads of departments would make no exertions to discountenance it, if they did not secretly or openly encourage it, yet I was so perfectly convinced of the national sense, and that the Senate felt it so strongly, that they would not dare to negative it, even if the majority had disliked it, which I very well knew they did not. I thought a clamor after the fact would be much less dangerous than a clamor before it. And so it proved in experience. A clamor there was, as I always knew there would be, and Alexander Hamilton had a principal underhand in exciting it.

It is well known that there are continued interviews between the members of the Senate and the members of the House, and the heads of departments. Eternal solicitations for nominations to office are made in this manner. There is not an executive measure, that members of Congress are not almost constantly employed in pumping from the heads of departments. There is not a legislative measure, that the heads of departments do not intermeddle in. It really deserves consideration, whether it would not be better that heads of departments should be mem-

bers of the legislature. There they would be confronted in all things. Now, all is secrecy and darkness. Washington, I know, was nearly as much vexed and tortured by these things as I was, and resigned his office to get rid of them. And so would I have done with great joy, if I could have been sure of a successor whose sentiments were as conformable to mine, as he knew mine were to his.

XI.

Mr. Hamilton, in his pamphlet, speaking of Talleyrand's despatches, says, "overtures so circuitous and informal, through a person who was not the regular organ of the French government for making them, to a person who was not the regular organ of the American government for receiving them, &c., were a very inadequate basis for the institution of a new mission."

Here, again, Mr. Hamilton's total ignorance or oblivion of the practice of our own government, as well as the constant usage of other nations in diplomatic proceedings, appears in all its lustre. In 1784, the Congress of the United States, the then sovereign of our country, issued fifteen commissions, as I remember. If I mistake the number, Colonel Humphreys can correct me, for he was the secretary of legation to them all, and possesses, as I suppose, the original parchments, to John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, to form commercial treaties with all the commercial powers of Europe and the Barbary States. Our instructions were to communicate these credentials to the ambassadors of these powers at Versailles, not to go to those courts. And we did communicate them in this informal and circuitous manner, and received very civil answers. We were not told, "If Congress wishes any connections with us, commercial or political, let them send ambassadors directly to our courts. It is inconsistent with our dignity to receive or pay any attention to such indirect, circuitous, and informal overtures."

These indirect and circuitous communications, as Hamilton calls them, are of established usage and daily practice all over the world. Instances of them without number might be quoted; I shall only recite two or three.

The Baron de Thulemeier, ambassador from Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, whose name and character Mr. Hamilton affects to admire, wrote me a letter when I was minister plenipotentiary in Holland, informing me that he had received the commands of the king, his master, to make me a visit, and communicate something to me as minister from the United States of America, and desired to know at what hour I would receive him.[1] I wrote him in answer, that I would have the honor of receiving him at twelve o'clock of the next day, or, if he wished an earlier interview, I would call on him at his hotel, at any hour he should be pleased to indicate. To this I received no answer, but at the hour I had mentioned his Excellency appeared at my house in the habiliments, and with the equipage of his ministerial character. He said that the king, his master, had ordered him to visit me and ask my opinion of a connection and treaty between Prussia and the United States of America. What a figure should I have made, if I had said, "This is all circuitous and informal; your master, if he wishes a connection, commercial or political, with America, must send an ambassador to Philadelphia, and propose it to Congress"! Yet Mr. Hamilton's doctrine and reasoning would have required this. The king, however, would have expected more sense of propriety, more knowledge of the intercourse of nations, and a more rational answer, from a deputy of one of our savage tribes, or one of the migratory hordes of Africa or Tartary. My answer was, "Be pleased, Sir, to present my most profound respects to his Majesty, and inform him, that though I have no commission or instructions to enter into official conferences upon the subject, I am very sensible of the high honor done me by this communication, and have no hesitation in expressing my private opinion, that such a connection between the United States and his Majesty's dominions would be highly honorable and advantageous, and I have no doubt Congress would be unanimous in the same sentiments." That without loss of time I would transmit to them an account of this conversation, and had no doubt they would authorize a minister to treat with his Majesty's minister. The Baron then said, he was farther directed to ask my opinion of a proper basis of a treaty. I answered, our treaty lately concluded with Holland would, in my opinion, be such a basis.

[1] See volume viii. p. 189.

Congress, when they received this information from me, did not say, "This is all informal and indirect, from obscure and unauthorized agents. The King of Prussia must send us an ambassador." Yet I sent them no official act of the king; no official letter under hand and seal from his prime minister, as Mr. Murray did to me. All was mere parol evidence, mere verbal conversation. Yet Congress immediately sent a commission to Adams, Franklin, and Jefferson, to treat with the king's minister. The king sent a commission to his minister; and a treaty was negotiated, concluded, and ratified, which now remains among the archives and printed documents of our country, not at all to her disgrace.

The king had previously ordered his ambassador to express to me his entire satisfaction with the interview between his ambassador and me; that he had maturely examined our treaty with Holland, and approved it as a basis of negotiation with him.

Another instance. Mr. Weems, a young gentleman of liberal education, from Virginia or Maryland, went to England in hopes of obtaining holy orders in the church. He wrote a letter to me, as American minister in Holland, though he had never seen me, and indeed has never seen me since, bitterly complaining not only of the stern refusal, but even of the rough treatment he had received from the English bishops, and even from the great Hurd.[1] He desired to know, if he could receive ordination from the bishops in Holland. There were no bishops in Holland; but there were Protestant bishops in Denmark. At the first meeting of the ambassadors, I asked M. de Saint Saphorin, the ambassador from Denmark, whether an American candidate for the ministry could receive from the bishops in his country Episcopal ordination; and whether any oaths, subscriptions, or professions of faith would be required; and whether the articles of the Church of England were sufficiently conformable to the faith of Denmark. "*Mon Dieu! Je n'en sais rien*" — "My God!" said Saint Saphorin, "I know nothing of the matter; but if you desire it, I will soon inform myself." I thanked him, and should be much obliged to him. In a shorter time than I could imagine, he came to inform me that he had written our conversation to the prime minister of his court, who had laid it

[1] See his letter, vol. viii. p. 184.

before the king, who had taken it into consideration in his council, and had ordered it to be laid before the convocation, who had unanimously determined that any American candidate of proper qualifications and good moral character should at any time receive ordination from any bishop in Denmark, without taking any oath or professing any other faith, but merely subscribing the articles of the Church of England. He even went so far as to say that the king, if we desired it, would appoint a bishop in one of his islands in the West Indies, to accommodate American candidates. I wrote this to Mr. Weems, and it soon procured him a more polite reception from the English clergy. Indeed, it laid the first foundation not only of Mr. Weems's ordination, but of the whole system of Episcopacy in the United States.

I also wrote a history of it to Congress, who, instead of reprimanding me, ordered me to transmit their thanks to the King of Denmark, which I did afterwards, through another indirect and informal channel, that of his ambassador at the court of London.

It seems that neither St. Saphorin, nor his prime minister, nor the king, their master, nor his council, nor the whole convocation of bishops, nor our American Congress, were such profound adepts in the law of nations and the diplomatic intercourse of sovereigns, as Mr. Hamilton. None of them discovered that it was inconsistent with their dignity to take notice of any thing less formal and direct than immediate communications from a resident ambassador.

Let me add another example. At the instigation of the Count de Vergennes, the Swedish ambassador at Versailles had written to his court to know whether it would be agreeable to them to form a treaty with the United States. Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he suggested this to Dr. Franklin, who, upon this simple verbal insinuation, wrote an account of it to Congress, who immediately sent him a commission. The King of Sweden sent a commission to his ambassador at Versailles. The treaty was concluded at Paris, and afterwards ratified by both powers. Yet no ambassador from Sweden to the United States has ever appeared, and no minister from the United States has ever gone to Sweden, to this day.

XII.

In the pamphlet it is said, that "the great alteration in public opinion had put it completely in the power of our executive to control the machinations of any future public agent of France." Therefore Philadelphia was a safer scene of negotiation than Paris.

Mr. Hamilton's erroneous conceptions of the public opinion may be excused by the considerations that he was not a native of the United States; that he was born and bred in the West Indies till he went to Scotland for education, where he spent his time in a seminary of learning till seventeen years of age, after which no man ever perfectly acquired a national character; then entered a college at New York, from whence he issued into the army as an aid-de-camp. In these situations he could scarcely acquire the opinions, feelings, or principles of the American people. His error may be excused by the further consideration, that his time was chiefly spent in his pleasures, in his electioneering visits, conferences, and correspondences, in propagating prejudices against every man whom he thought his superior in the public estimation, and in composing ambitious reports upon finance, while the real business of the treasury was done by Duer, by Wolcott, and even, for some time and in part, by Tench Coxe.

His observation, that "France will never be without secret agents," is true, and it is equally true that England will always have secret agents and emissaries too. That her "partisans among our own citizens can much better promote her cause than any agents she can send," is also true; but it is at least equally true of the partisans of Great Britain. We have seen, in the foregoing papers, glaring and atrocious instances of the exertions of her public agents, secret emissaries, and partisans, among our citizens. But none have yet been mentioned that bear any comparison, in point of guilt and arrogance, with those of all kinds that have been exhibited within the last two or three years.

My worthy fellow-citizens! Our form of government, inestimable as it is, exposes us, more than any other, to the insidious intrigues and pestilent influence of foreign nations. Nothing but our inflexible neutrality can preserve us. The public nego-

tiations and secret intrigues of the English and the French have been employed for centuries in every court and country of Europe. Look back to the history of Spain, Holland, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Italy, and Turkey, for the last hundred years. How many revolutions have been caused! How many emperors and kings have fallen victims to the alternate triumphs of parties, excited by Englishmen or Frenchmen! And can we expect to escape the vigilant attention of politicians so experienced, so keen-sighted, and so rich? If we convince them that our attachment to neutrality is unchangeable, they will let us alone; but as long as a hope remains, in either power, of seducing us to engage in war on his side and against his enemy, we shall be torn and convulsed by their manœuvres.

Never was there a grosser mistake of public opinion than that of Mr. Hamilton. The great alteration in public opinion had not then, nor has it yet, taken place. The French republic still existed. The French people were still considered as struggling for liberty, amidst all their internal revolutions, their conflicts of parties, and their bloody wars against the coalitions of European powers. Monarchy, empire, had not been suggested. Bonaparte had appeared only as a soldier; had acted on the public stage in no civil or political employment. A sense of gratitude for services rendered us in our revolution, by far more sincere and ardent than reason or justice could warrant, still remained on the minds, not only of our republicans, but of great numbers of our soundest federalists. Did Mr. Hamilton recollect the state of our presses; recollect the names and popular eloquence of the editors of the opposition papers; that scoffing, scorning wit, and that caustic malignity of soul, which appeared so remarkably in all the writings of Thomas Paine and Callender, which to the disgrace of human nature never fails to command attention and applause; the members of the Senate and House who were decided against the administration, their continual intercourse and communications with French emissaries; the hideous clamor against the alien law and sedition law, both considered as levelled entirely against the French and their friends; and the surrender, according to the British treaty, of the Irish murderer Nash, imposed upon the public for Jonathan Robins? Did he recollect the insurrec-

tion in Pennsylvania, the universal and perpetual inflammatory publications against the land tax, stamp tax, coach tax, excise law, and eight per cent. loan? Did he never see nor hear of the circular letters of members of Congress from the middle and southern States? Did he know nothing of the biting sarcasms, the burning rage against himself and his own army? Did he know nothing of a kind of journal that was published, of every irregular act of any officer or soldier, of every military punishment that was inflicted, under the appellation of the Cannibal's Progress? Did he see nothing of the French cockades, ostentatiously exhibited against the American cockades?

Had a French minister been seen here with his suite, he would have been instantly informed of every source and symptom of discontent. Almost every Frenchman upon the continent, and they were then numerous in all the States, would have been employed in criminating the American Government, in applauding the condescension of the French Directory, and the friendly, conciliating disposition of the French nation. Nothing could have been kept secret. The popular clamor for peace on any terms would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to resist. The multitude in Philadelphia, as it was, were almost as ripe to pull me out of my house as they had been to dethrone Washington in the time of Genet. Even the night of the fast-day, the streets were crowded with multitudinous assemblies of the people, especially that before my door, and kept in order only, as many people thought, by a military patrol, ordered, I believe, by the Governor of Pennsylvania.

In these circumstances it was my opinion, and it is so still, it was infinitely better to conduct the negotiation at Paris than in Philadelphia. But if this was and is an error, it was certainly not of such consequence as Hamilton thought fit to represent it. If it was an error, I humbly conceive it would have better become Mr. Hamilton to have been silent than to endeavor to make it unpopular, since the step was taken and irrevocable when he wrote.

But the real truth is, he was in hopes, as well as Mr. Liston, that the French government would neither send a minister here nor receive one there — in short, that they would have gone to war with us. If we had waited for a minister here, much time would have been lost. Our little naval force under Talbot,

Truxtun, Decatur, Little, &c., was doing wonders in protecting our commerce, and in fighting and capturing French ships of war. Some of our citizens were not wanting in irritating expressions of exultation and triumph, particularly in parading a French national ship that had been captured by Decatur, up the Delaware, in sight of all the citizens of Philadelphia, with the French national colors reversed under our American flag. Hamilton hoped that such provocations would produce an irreconcilable breach and a declaration of war. He was disappointed, and lost the command of his army. *Hinc illæ lacrimæ!*

There were other circumstances of more serious and solid importance, indicative of public opinion, which Mr. Hamilton, if he had been a vigilant and sagacious statesman, could not have overlooked. The venerable patriarchs, Pendleton and Wythe, of Virginia, openly declaimed for peace; the former came out in print with his name, protesting against a war with our sister republic of France. General Heath came out with an address to the public in Massachusetts, declaring that every man he met was decidedly for peace. When the election was coming on, the legislature of Massachusetts dare not trust the people, either at large or in districts, to choose electors, but assumed that office to themselves. In New York, the great interest and vast bodies of the people, who are supposed to follow or direct the two great families of Clintons and Livingstons, aided by all the address and dexterity of Aaron Burr, was decidedly for peace with France. In Pennsylvania, Governor M'Kean, with his majority of thirty thousand votes, or in other words, at the head of the two vast bodies of Germans and Irish, reënforced by great numbers of English Presbyterians, Quakers and Anabaptists, were decidedly against a war with France.

After enumerating all these symptoms of the popular bias, it would be frivolous to enlarge upon the conversations, of which I was informed, at taverns and insurance offices, threatening violence to the President by pulling him out of his chair; upon the French cockades that were everywhere paraded before my eyes, in opposition to the black cockade; or upon the declarations and oaths, which I know were made by no small numbers, that if we went to war with France, and the French should come here, they would join them against the federalists and the

English. These things I recollect with grief, because they do no honor to our country; but I must say they disgrace it no more than many more solemn actions and declarations of the opposite party, against France and in favor of England, have done within the last twelve months.

In these circumstances, it was the height of folly to say, as Hamilton says, that it would have been safer to negotiate at Philadelphia than at Paris. As to our ambassadors' being overawed in Paris, by any finesse of politicians, or triumphs of the French arms, we must take care to send men who are equal to such trials. The French have not, as yet, gained any great and unjust advantages of us by all their policy. Our envoys were precisely instructed. Every article was prescribed that was to be insisted on as an ultimatum. In a treaty they could not depart from a punctilio. A convention they might make, as they did, at their own risk. But the President and Senate were under no obligation to ratify it. Had it betrayed a single point of essential honor or interest, I would have sent it back, as Mr. Jefferson did the treaty with England, without laying it before the Senate. If I had been doubtful, the Senate would have decided.

Where, then, was the danger of this negotiation? Nowhere but in the disturbed imagination of Alexander Hamilton. To me only it was dangerous. To me, as a public man, it was fatal, and that only because Alexander Hamilton was pleased to wield it as a poisoned weapon with the express purpose of destroying. Though I owe him no thanks for this, I most heartily rejoice in it, because it has given me eight years, incomparably the happiest of my life, whereas, had I been chosen President again, I am certain I could not have lived another year. It was utterly impossible that I could have lived through one year more of such labors and cares as were studiously and maliciously accumulated upon me by the French faction and the British faction, the former aided by the republicans, and the latter by Alexander Hamilton and his satellites.

XIII.

Mr. Hamilton, in his pamphlet, speaks of the anterior mission of Messrs. Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry, and says, "it was *resolved* to make another and a more solemn experiment in the form of a commission of three."

When I first read this sentence, I am not certain whether it excited most of astonishment, indignation, contempt, or ridicule. By *whom* was this measure *resolved?* By President Washington? Certainly not. If it had been, he would have nominated the ministers. By the President elect, Mr. Adams? Certainly not. He had not been consulted. His resolutions were not known. By whom, then, was this important resolution taken? By Mr. Hamilton and his privy counsellors. And what had Mr. Hamilton and his privy counsellors to do with the business? And who were his privy counsellors?[1]

Page 22, he says, "the expediency of the step was suggested to Mr. Adams, through a federal channel, a considerable time before he determined to take it. He hesitated whether it could be done, after the rejection of General Pinckney, without national debasement. The doubt was an honorable one." I disclaim and renounce all the honor of this doubt. I never entertained such a doubt for a moment. I might ask the opinion of twenty persons (for I, too, "consulted much"), in order to discover whether there was any doubt in the public mind, or any party who were averse to such a measure, or had any doubt about it. But I never had any hesitation myself. This passage, like all the rest of this pamphlet, shows that it was written from his mere imagination, from confused rumors, or downright false information.

It is true, "the expediency of the step was suggested to Mr. Adams," before he took the step, and before he had time to take it, but long after he had determined to take it. The mystery may be revealed. I have no motive, whatever others may have, to conceal or dissemble it.

The morning after my inauguration,[2] Mr. Fisher Ames made

[1] These questions, in process of time, find their solution. See the letter of Mr. Hamilton to T. Sedgwick, Senator from Massachusetts, 26th February, 1797. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. p. 209.

[2] This conversation occurred the day *before* the inauguration; which is con-

me a visit to take leave. His period in Congress had expired, and the delicacy of his health, the despondency of his disposition, and despair of a reëlection from the increase of the opposite party in his district, had induced him to decline to stand a candidate. I was no longer to have the assistance of his counsel and eloquence, though Mr. Hamilton continued to enjoy both till his death. Mr. Ames was no doubt one of Mr. Hamilton's privy council, when he *resolved* to send a new commission of three. Mr. Ames, with much gravity and solemnity, advised me to institute a new mission to France. Our affairs with that republic were in an unpleasant and dangerous situation, and the people, in a long recess of Congress, must have some object on which to fix their contemplation and their hopes. And he recommended Mr. George Cabot, for the northern States, to be one of the three, if a commission was to be sent, or alone, if but one was to go.

I answered Mr. Ames, that the subject had almost engrossed my attention for a long time. That I should take every thing into serious consideration, and determine nothing suddenly; that I should make deliberate inquiries concerning characters, and maturely consider the qualities and qualifications of candidates, before any thing was finally determined. Mr. Ames departed for Massachusetts.[1]

firmed by Mr. Jefferson, in his account of the interview that followed; also by a letter to Mr. Gerry, vol. viii. p. 539.

[1] This is an abridgment of the following account originally drawn up in 1801:

"On the 3d or 4th of March, 1797, Mr. Fisher Ames, of Massachusetts, made a visit to Mr. Adams at his lodgings before he took possession of the President's house. He did not inform Mr. Adams, that he came at the instigation of Mr. Hamilton; but he said 'he waited on Mr. Adams to propose to him something which labored much in his mind. Congress was about to rise. The recess would be long. The people, in the recess of Congress, felt like sheep without a shepherd. They had no object to which they could look up. The children of Israel must have a pillar of fire to go before them by night, as well as a cloud by day. All were anxious about the state of our affairs with France. General Pinckney, although no doubt a worthy man, and of high character in the southern States, was not known in the northern, and very little known in the middle States. The whole American people were too little acquainted with his person and character, to rest upon it with entire confidence and satisfaction, and he had too little experience in the political affairs of the United States to be able, probably, to form a perfect estimate of the present views and temper of the whole continent. He thought it expedient, therefore, to send some gentleman from the northern States, who knew the present state of America, and in whom the northern and middle States could fully confide; and he named Mr. George Cabot, of Massachusetts, as the candidate.' Mr. Hamilton says, 'Mr. Adams hesitated whether it could be done after the rejection of General Pinckney,

I had rolled all these things in my own mind long before. The French nation and their government were in a very umbrageous and inflammable disposition. Much delicacy and deliberation were necessary in the choice of characters. Most of the prominent characters in America were as well known at Paris as they were at Philadelphia. I had sometimes thought of sending Mr. Madison and Mr. Hamilton, to join Mr. Pinckney, in a new commission. I had thought of Mr. Ames himself, as well as Mr. Cabot, Judge Dana, Mr. Gerry, and many others in the northern, middle, and southern States. I thought much of Mr. Jefferson, but had great doubt whether the Constitution would allow me to send the Vice-President abroad. The nation at large had assigned him a station, which I doubted whether he had a right to abandon, or I a right to invite him to relinquish, though but for a time.

I had great doubts about reappointing Mr. Pinckney. He might have been so affected with the horrors he had seen or heard in France, as to have uttered some expressions, which, reported by spies to the ruling powers, might have excited prejudices against him, which would insure his second rejection, and that of his colleagues too. But as I knew of no such accusation, I could not bear the thought of abandoning him. I had not time to communicate all these reflections to Mr. Ames, and, moreover, I had business of more importance to do. I had long wished to avail myself and the public of the fine talents and amiable qualities and manners of Mr. Madison. Soon after Mr. Ames left me, I sought and obtained an interview with Mr. Jefferson. With this gentleman I had lived on terms of intimate

without national debasement.' Here is the anachronism and confusion of ideas. The news of the rejection of General Pinckney had not then arrived in any part of America, and it was not till several weeks afterwards that it did arrive. So that it is impossible that Mr. Adams could then have hesitated for that reason. The truth is, he hesitated not a moment, for the idea had been familiar to him for several weeks. He answered Mr. Ames in this manner; 'He was much obliged to Mr. Ames for his visit and advice; was very happy to find, that the measure of sending a new minister or ministers to join General Pinckney, had occurred to Mr. Ames, and had his approbation. That it was a thought which he had revolved in his own mind for some time; that he should think of it very seriously, and, if he should ultimately resolve upon it, after he should have considered the questions whether one or two should be sent, and also considered who were the persons most likely to give satisfaction everywhere, Mr. Ames might hear more of it, and possibly before the Senate should adjourn; that he thought very well of Mr. Cabot, but could determine nothing at present.' Mr. Ames returned to Massachusetts, and Mr. Adams set himself to consider the whole subject"

friendship for five-and-twenty years, had acted with him in dangerous times and arduous conflicts, and always found him assiduous, laborious, and as far as I could judge, upright and faithful. Though by this time I differed from him in opinion by the whole horizon concerning the practicability and success of the French revolution, and some other points, I had no reason to think that he differed materially from me with regard to our national Constitution. I did not think that the rumbling noise of party calumny ought to discourage me from consulting men whom I knew to be attached to the interest of the nation, and whose experience, genius, learning, and travels had eminently qualified them to give advice. I asked Mr. Jefferson what he thought of another trip to Paris, and whether he thought the Constitution and the people would be willing to spare him for a short time. "Are you determined to send to France?" "Yes." "That is right," said Mr. Jefferson; "but without considering whether the Constitution will allow it or not, I am so sick of residing in Europe, that I believe I shall never go there again." I replied, "I own I have strong doubts whether it would be legal to appoint you; but I believe no man could do the business so well. What do you think of sending Mr. Madison? Do you think he would accept of an appointment?" "I do not know," said Mr. Jefferson. "Washington wanted to appoint him some time ago, and kept the place open for him a long time; but he never could get him to say that he would go." Other characters were considered, and other conversation ensued. We parted as good friends as we had always lived; but we consulted very little together afterwards. Party violence soon rendered it impracticable, or at least useless, and this party violence was excited by Hamilton more than any other man.[1]

I will not take leave of Mr. Jefferson in this place, without declaring my opinion that the accusations against him of blind devotion to France, of hostility to England, of hatred to commerce, of partiality and duplicity in his late negotiations with the belligerent powers, are without foundation.

From Mr. Jefferson I went to one of the heads of departments,[2] whom Mr. Washington had appointed, and I had no

[1] Compare Mr. Jefferson's account of this conference, vol. iv. of his works, p. 501. Also pp. 538 – 539 of volume viii. of this work.

[2] O. Wolcott, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury.

thoughts of removing. Indeed, I had then no objection to any of the secretaries. I asked him what he thought of sending Mr. Madison to France, with or without others. "Is it determined to send to France at all?" "Determined! Nothing is determined till it is executed," smiling. "But why not? I thought it deserved consideration." "So it does." "But suppose it determined, what do you think of sending Mr. Madison?" "Is it determined to send Mr. Madison?" "No; but it deserves consideration." "Sending Mr. Madison will make dire work among the passions of our parties in Congress, and out of doors, through the States!" "Are we forever to be overawed and directed by party passions?" All this conversation on my part was with the most perfect civility, good humor, and indeed familiarity; but I found it excited a profound gloom and solemn countenance in my companion, which after some time broke out in, "Mr. President, we are willing to resign." Nothing could have been more unexpected to me than this observation; nothing was farther from my thoughts than to give any pain or uneasiness. I had said nothing that could possibly displease, except pronouncing the name of Madison. I restrained my surprise, however, and only said, I hope nobody will resign; I am satisfied with all the public officers.

Upon further inquiries of the other heads of departments and of other persons, I found that party passions had so deep and extensive roots, that I seriously doubted whether the Senate would not negative Mr. Madison, if I should name him. Rather than to expose him to a negative, or a doubtful contest in the Senate, I concluded to omit him. If I had nominated Madison, I should have nominated Hamilton with him.[1] The former, I knew, was much esteemed in France; the latter was rather an object of jealousy. But I thought the French would tolerate one for the sake of the other. And I thought, too, that the manners of the one would soon wear off the prejudices against him, and probably make him a greater favorite than the other. But having given up Madison, I ought to give up Hamilton too. Whom then should I name? I mentioned Mr. Dana and

[1] In the early draught, Mr. Adams says, he "would very willingly have appointed Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Madison, with one other, if he had thought it probable Mr. Madison would accept, and that the Senate would consent, and if he had thought it compatible with the spirit which America ought to display at that time."

Mr. Gerry to the heads of departments, and to many leading men in both houses. They all preferred Mr. Dana. But it was evident enough to me that neither Dana nor Gerry was their man. Dana was appointed, but refused. I then called the heads of departments together, and proposed Mr. Gerry. All the five[1] voices unanimously were against him. Such inveterate prejudice shocked me. I said nothing, but was determined I would not be the slave of it. I knew the man infinitely better than all of them. He was nominated and approved, and finally saved the peace of the nation; for he alone discovered and furnished the evidence that X. Y. and Z. were employed by Talleyrand; and he alone brought home the direct, formal, and official assurances upon which the subsequent commission proceeded, and peace was made.

I considered Mr. Ames's candidate, Mr. Cabot,[2] as deliberately as any of the others, and with as favorable and friendly a disposition towards him as any other without exception. But I knew his character and connections were as well known in France, particularly by Talleyrand, as Mr. Gerry's were; and that there were great objections against the former, and none at all against the latter. It would be therefore inexcusable in me to hazard the success of the mission merely to gratify the passions of a party in America, especially as I knew Mr. Gerry, to say the least, to be full as well qualified by his studies, his experience, and every quality, for the service, as the other.

I afterwards nominated Mr. Cabot to be Secretary of the Navy, a station as useful, as important, and as honorable, as the other, and for which he was eminently qualified. But this he refused.

No man had a greater share in propagating and diffusing these prejudices against Mr. Gerry than Hamilton. Whether he had formerly conceived jealousies against him as a rival candidate for the secretaryship of the treasury; (for Mr. Gerry was a financier, and had been employed for years on the committee on the treasury in the old Congress, and a most indefatigable

[1] A mistake pointed out by Mr. Stoddert, one of the five ministers alluded to, but his office had not been created in March, 1797. Mr. Adams promised to correct it in any later publication of these papers, but none has taken place until now.

[2] Or rather nominated by Mr. Hamilton, not only through Mr. Ames, but Mr. Pickering and Mr. Wolcott. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 214, 218, 230.

member too; that committee had laid the foundation for the present system of the treasury, and had organized it almost as well, though they had not the assistance of clerks and other conveniences as at present; any man who will look into the journals of the old Congress, may see the organization and the daily labors and reports of that committee, and may form some judgment of the talents and services of Mr. Gerry in that department; I knew that the officers of the treasury, in Hamilton's time, dreaded to see him rise in the House upon any question of finance, because they said he was a man of so much influence that they always feared he would discover some error or carry some point against them); or whether he feared that Mr. Gerry would be President of the United States before him, I know not.[1] He was not alone, however. His friends among the heads of departments, and their correspondents in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, sympathized with him very cordially in his hatred of Gerry, and of every other man who had labored and suffered early in the revolution.

This preference of Mr. Gerry to Mr. Cabot was my first mortal offence against my sovereign heads of departments and their disciples in all the States. It never was or has been forgiven me by those who call themselves, or are called by others, "the leading men" among the federalists.

Mr. Hamilton says, "After the rejection of Mr. Pinckney by the government of France, immediately after the instalment of Mr. Adams as President,[2] and long before the measure was taken, I urged a member of Congress, then high in the confidence of the President, to propose to him the immediate appointment of three commissioners, of whom Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Madison to be one, to make another attempt to negotiate."

I will relate all that I can recollect relative to this subject. Mr. Tracy, of Connecticut, who indeed was always in my confidence, came to me, I believe, at the opening of the special session of Congress, which I called soon after my inauguration,

[1] This is regarded as very unjust by Mr. Gibbs. But it is deserving of particular notice that no leading public man of the country, in any way of rival powers, receives aid to his reputation from the publication that has been made of Mr. Hamilton's writings.

[2] The anachronism here, so far as the first event can be supposed to have had any share in Mr. Hamilton's action at the time here specified, is evident. Mr. Pinckney's letter of the 1st of February, notifying his rejection, was not received in America until the month of April.

and produced a long, elaborate letter from Mr. Hamilton, containing a whole system of instruction for the conduct of the President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. I read it very deliberately, and really thought the man was in a delirium. It appeared to me a very extraordinary instance of volunteer empiricism thus to prescribe for a President, Senate, and House of Representatives, all desperately sick and in a state of deplorable debility, without being called. And when I maturely considered the contents of the letter, my surprise was increased. I despised and detested the letter too much to take a copy of it, which I now regret. This letter is still in being, and I doubt not many copies of it are extant. I most earnestly request any gentleman who possesses one, to publish it. That letter, though it had no influence with me, had so much with both houses of Congress as to lay the foundation of the overthrow of the federal party, and of the revolution that followed four years afterwards. I will endeavor to recollect as much of the contents of it as I can, and if I am incorrect in any point, those who possess the letter can, by the publication of it, easily set all right.

It began by a dissertation on the extraordinarily critical situation of the United States.

It recommended a new mission to France of three commissioners, Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Madison to be one.

It recommended the raising an army of fifty thousand men, ten thousand of them to be cavalry; an army of great importance in so extensive a country, vulnerable at so many points on the frontiers, and so accessible in so many places by sea.

It recommended an alien and sedition law.

It recommended an invigoration of the treasury, by seizing on all the taxable articles not yet taxed by the government. And lastly,

It recommended a national Fast, not only on account of the intrinsic propriety of it, but because we should be very unskilful if we neglected to avail ourselves of the religious feelings of the people in a crisis so difficult and dangerous.

There might be more, but these are all that I now recollect.

Mr. Hamilton's imagination was always haunted by that

hideous monster or phantom, so often called a *crisis*, and which so often produces imprudent measures.[1]

How it happened that Mr. Hamilton's contemplations coincided so exactly with mine, as to think of Mr. Jefferson or Mr. Madison for envoy to France, it may be more difficult to explain. But let it be considered that this letter was written long after my conversation with Mr. Jefferson, concerning himself and Mr. Madison, which was the morning after my inauguration;[2] that I had communicated that conversation to one or more of the heads of departments the same morning. It is probable, therefore, that Mr. Hamilton received hints from some of his correspondents that I had thought of Madison and Hamilton, and that he was not displeased with the idea.[3] I asked one of the heads of departments, how he could account for Hamilton's recommending Jefferson or Madison. "Why," said the gentleman, "I suppose Hamilton is weary of his practice as an attorney, at New York, and is willing to enter into some other employment." Mr. Hamilton, however, might thank those who had been his warmest friends for his disappointment; for, had it not been for their opposition to Madison, I should have appointed him and Hamilton.

The army of fifty thousand men, ten thousand of them to be horse, appeared to me to be one of the wildest extravagances of a knight-errant. It proved to me that Mr. Hamilton knew no more of the sentiments and feelings of the people of America, than he did of those of the inhabitants of one of the planets. Such an army without an enemy to combat, would have raised a rebellion in every State in the Union. The very idea of the expense of it would have turned President, Senate, and House out of doors. I adopted none of these chimeras into my speech, and only recommended the raising of a few regiments of artillery to garrison the fortifications of the most exposed places. Yet such was the influence of Mr. Hamilton in Congress, that, without any recommendation from the President, they passed a bill to raise an army, not a large one, indeed, but enough to overturn the then Federal government.

[1] See Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*. G. Morris to Aaron Ogden, vol. iii. p. 216–17.

[2] The morning before. Mr. Wolcott is the head of department alluded to.

[3] This is not just to Mr. Hamilton, who certainly had suggested this mission as early as February, 1797, to Mr. Sedgwick.

Nor did I adopt his idea of an alien or sedition law. I recommended no such thing in my speech. Congress, however, adopted both these measures. I knew there was need enough of both, and therefore I consented to them. But as they were then considered as war measures, and intended altogether against the advocates of the French and peace with France, I was apprehensive that a hurricane of clamor would be raised against them, as in truth there was, even more fierce and violent than I had anticipated.

Seizing on all the taxable articles not yet taxed, to support an army of fifty thousand men, at a time when so many tax laws, already enacted, were unexecuted in so many States, and when insurrections and rebellions had already been excited in Pennsylvania, on account of taxes, appeared to me altogether desperate, altogether delirious.[1]

I wanted no admonition from Mr. Hamilton to institute a national fast. I had determined on this measure long enough before Mr. Hamilton's letter was written. And here let me say, with great sincerity, that I think there is nothing upon this earth more sublime and affecting than the idea of a great nation all on their knees at once before their God, acknowledging their faults and imploring his blessing and protection, when the prospect before them threatens great danger and calamity. It can scarcely fail to have a favorable effect on their morals in general, or to inspire them with warlike virtues in particular. When most, if not all of the religious sects in the nation, hold such fasts among themselves, I never could see the force of the objections against making them, on great and extraordinary occasions, national; unless it be the jealousy of the separate States, lest the general government should become too national. Those however, who differ from me in opinion on this point, have as good a right to their judgment as I have to mine, and I shall submit mine to the general will.

In fine, Mr. Hamilton, in the passage I have been commenting upon, in this letter, has let out facts which, if he had possessed a grain of common sense, he would have wished should be forever concealed. I should never have revealed or explained them, if he and his partisans had not compelled me.

[1] See Mr. Hamilton's plan, in his letter to O. Wolcott. *Works*, vol. vi. pp. 252 – 254.

XIV.

In page 26, is a strain of flimsy rant, as silly as it is indecent. "The supplement to the declaration was a blamable excess. It waved the point of honor, which after two rejections of our ministers required that the next mission should proceed from France."

Where did he find this point of honor? If any such point had existed, it had its full force against the second mission; and its principal force consisted in the formal declaration of the Directory, that it "never would receive another minister plenipotentiary without apologies for the President's speeches and answers to addresses." If we had a right to wave this point of honor in one instance, we had in two, especially as one member of the second mission was the same man who had been rejected in the first. But after the explicit retraction of the declaration that they would not receive a minister without apologies, the point of honor was completely done away. To give them an opportunity of retracting that declaration, I declared, in my message to Congress, that I would not send another minister to France till this declaration was retracted by assurances that he should be received in character. They embraced the opportunity cordially, when they might have avoided the humiliation by sending a minister here. And whatever Hamilton's opinion might be, I knew that they might have negotiated more to their advantage here than in Paris. Hamilton's fingers had not the tact, or tactility, if you like the word better, of the public pulse.

He argues the probability that France would have sent a minister here, from the fact that she did afterwards "stifle her resentment, and invite the renewal of negotiation." I know not whether this is an example of Mr. Hamilton's "analysis of investigation" or not. It is an argument *a posteriori*. It is reasoning upward or backward.

These invitations were not known nor made, when I pledged myself, by implication at least, to send a minister, when such invitations should be made. When they were made, I considered my own honor and the honor of the government committed. And I have not a doubt that Hamilton thought so too; and that one of his principal vexations was, that neither himself nor his privy counsellors could have influence enough

with me to persuade or intimidate me to disgrace myself in the eyes of the people of America and the world by violating my parole.

This he might think would assist him in his caucuses at New York and Philadelphia, where the honor, not only of every member, but of every State and every elector, was to be pledged, to give an equal vote for Pinckney and Adams, that the choice of President should be left to the House of Representatives, whose members, on the day of election, or the day before, were to be furnished with this pamphlet, spick and span, to make sure of *the sacrifice* of Adams. But more of this hereafter.

In the mean time, what reasons had we to expect that the French government would send a minister here? Such an idea had been whispered in private conversation, perhaps, by Dr. Logan and some others; but we had not a color of official information to that effect, that I remember. What motives had the French to send a minister? They had committed depredations upon our commerce, to the amount, it has been said, of twenty millions of dollars. Would the Directory have been animated with any great zeal to send an ambassador to offer us compensation for these spoliations, at a time when they were driven to their wit's end to find revenues and resources to carry on the war in Europe, and break the confederations against them?

We had declared the treaty of alliance, and all treaties between France and the United States, null and void. Do we suppose the French government would have been in haste to send an ambassador to offer us a solemn revocation, by treaty, of all former treaties? What urgent motive could the French have to be in haste to send a minister? They could not be apprehensive that we should send an army to Europe to conquer France, or assist her enemies. We had no naval power sufficient to combat their navy in Europe, which was then far from being reduced as it has been since. They had no commerce or mercantile navigation, upon which our little navy or privateers could have made reprisals.

There is but one motive that I can imagine should have stimulated them very much, and that is, the apprehension that we might enter into an alliance offensive and defensive with Great Britain. This they might have considered as a serious affair

to them in a course of time, though they might not fear any very immediate harm from it. But I doubt not the French had information from a thousand emissaries, and Talleyrand knew from personal observation in various parts of America, and Hamilton must have known, if he had any feeling of the popular pulse, that a vast majority of the people of America dreaded an alliance with Great Britain more than they did a war with France. It would have taken a long time, it would have required a long and bloody war with France, and a violent exasperation of the public mind, to have reconciled the people to any such measure. No, Hamilton and his associates could not have seriously believed that the French would soon send a minister here. If they had not, or if they had delayed it, Hamilton would have continued at the head of his army. Continual provocations and irritations would have taken place between the two nations, till one or the other would have declared war. In the mean time, it was my opinion then, and has been ever since, that the two parties in the United States would have broken out into a civil war; a majority of all the States to the southward of Hudson River, united with nearly half New England, would have raised an army under Aaron Burr; a majority of New England might have raised another under Hamilton. Burr would have beaten Hamilton to pieces, and what would have followed next, let the prophets foretell. But such would have been the result of Hamilton's "enterprises of great pith and moment." I say this would probably have been the course and result of things, had a majority of New England continued to be attached to Hamilton, his men and measures. But I am far from believing this. On the contrary, had not our envoys proceeded, had not the people expected a peace with France from that negotiation, New England herself, at the elections of 1800, would have turned out Hamilton's whole party, and united with the southern and middle States in bringing in men who might have made peace on much less advantageous terms.

And now, let the world judge who "consulted much," who "pondered much," who "resolved slowly," and who "resolved surely."

XV.

Mr. Hamilton acknowledges, that "the President had pledged himself in his speech" (he should have said in his message) "to send a minister, if satisfactory assurances of a proper reception were given." Notwithstanding this, Mr. Hamilton, and all his confidential friends, exerted their utmost art and most strenuous endeavors to prevail on the President to violate this pledge. What can any man think of the disposition of these men towards the personal or official character of the President, but that they were secretly, if not avowedly, his most determined and most venomous enemies? When the measure had been solemnly, irrevocably determined, and could not be recalled nor delayed without indelible dishonor, I own I was astonished, I was grieved, I was afflicted, to see such artificial schemes employed, such delays studied, such embarrassments thrown in the way, by men who were, or at least ought to have been, my bosom friends.

This was a point of honor indeed; not such a stupid, fantastical point of honor as that which Mr. Hamilton maintains with so much fanaticism and so much folly; but a point of honor in which my moral character was involved as well as the public faith of the nation. Hamilton's point of honor was such as one of those Irish duellists, who love fighting better than feasting, might have made a pretext for sending a challenge; and however conformable it might be to Hamilton's manner of thinking, it was altogether inconsistent with the moral, religious, and political character of the people of America. It was such a point of honor as a Machiavelian or a Jesuit might have made a pretext for a war. It was such a point of honor as a Roman senate, in the most corrupt days of that republic, might have made a pretext for involving the nation in a foreign war, when patrician monopolies of land, and patrician usury at twelve per cent. a month, had excited the plebeian debtors to the crisis of a civil war. But the American people were not Roman plebeians. They were not to be deceived by such thin disguises.

Surely, those who have lately censured Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, for insisting on knowing the satisfaction which was to be given for the outrage on the Chesapeake, before they

revoked a certain proclamation, can never blame me for not insisting on a point that was no point of honor at all.

Mr. Hamilton says, "When the President pledged himself in his speech" (he should have said his message) "to send a minister, if satisfactory assurances of a proper reception were given, he must have been understood to mean such as were *direct* and *official*, not such as were both *informal and destitute of a competent sanction.*"

The words "direct and indirect," "official and inofficial," "formal and informal," "competent sanction," &c., appear to have seized this gentleman's mind, and to have rolled and tumbled in it till they had produced an entire confusion of his understanding.

He here supposes that I did not understand my own message, and patriotically undertakes to expound it both for me and the public. According to his metaphysics, I meant, by assurances of a proper reception, assurances direct and official, not such as were informal. Let me ask, what more formal or official assurances could have been given than Talleyrand's letters? What more formal, official, or direct, than Mr. Gerry's letters? If I understand Mr. Hamilton, he must have meant to say that my message demanded an ambassador to be sent directly from the Directory to me, for the express purpose of assuring me that they would receive a minister plenipotentiary from me. This, instead of being my meaning, was directly the reverse of it. From first to last I had refused to be taken in this snare. I had always refused to demand that a minister should be sent here first, though I had declared explicitly enough in my speech, that a French minister, if sent, should be received. I had always insisted that both the doors of negotiation should be held open. And as I have already said, I now repeat, that I preferred to send a minister rather than to receive one; not only for the reasons explained in a former letter, but because I thought the *amende honorable* ought to be made at Paris, where the offence was given; where it would be known and observed by all Europe; whereas, if it had been made at Philadelphia, little notice would have been taken of it by any part of the world.

I am somewhat disappointed in not finding in this pamphlet the word "obscure" applied to Mr. Pichon, because the newspapers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, written by Mr.

Hamilton's coadjutors and fellow-laborers in the same field of scandal, had profusely scattered their dull sarcasms on the obscurity of the agent or agents at the Hague. Mr. Pichon obscure! A secretary of legation and *chargé des affaires* obscure, especially in the absence of his ambassador! The office of secretary of legation is an object of ambition and desire to many of the first scientific and literary characters in Europe. The place is worth about a thousand guineas a year, and affords a fine opportunity and great advantages for travel, and is commonly a sure road to promotion. These secretaries are almost always men of science, letters, and business. They are often more relied upon than the ambassadors themselves for the substantial part of business. Ambassadors are often chosen for their birth, rank, title, riches, beauty, elegance of manners, or good humor. They are intended to do honor to their sovereigns by their appearance and representation. Secretaries of legation are selected for their science, learning, talents, industry, and habits of business. I doubt not Mr. Locke or Sir Isaac Newton in their younger days would have thought themselves fortunate to have been offered such a place. Would these have been called obscure? Was Matthew Prior or David Hume obscure? Yet both of them were secretaries of legation!

Such reflections as these, which were thrown upon Mr. Pichon, might impose upon a people who knew no better than the writers, but must have been despised by every man who knew any thing of the world.

Had Talleyrand sent his letters to General Washington to be communicated to me, had he sent them directly to my Secretary of State, had he sent them to the Spanish minister to be by him communicated to the Secretary of State, or to the Dutch minister for the same purpose, I do not say that I would have nominated a minister in consequence of them; nor will I say that I would not. There is no need to determine this question, because, in fact, the utmost rigor of diplomatic etiquette was observed. But I will say, that my message demanded nothing but evidence to convince my own mind and give satisfaction to the Senate and the public, that a minister would be received. And if such evidence had arrived to me in any manner that would leave no doubt in the public mind, I would not have sacrificed the national neutrality to any diplomatic trammels or shackles whatever.

XVI.

In page 26, Mr. Hamilton says, that the mission "could hardly fail to injure our interests with other countries."

This is another of those phantoms which he had conjured up to terrify minds and nerves as weak as his own. It was a commonplace theme of discourse, which, no doubt, the British faction very efficaciously assisted him in propagating. I know it made impression on some, from whose lips I too often heard it, and from whom I expected more sense and firmness. It appeared to me so mean, servile, and timorous, that I own I did not always hear it with patience.

Which were those other countries? They could not be Spain, Holland, or any countries in the north or south of Europe which were in alliance with France or under her obedience. They could be only England, Russia, and Sweden, for we had nothing to do with any but maritime powers. And what interest of ours could be injured with any of these powers? Would any of these powers make war upon us, and sacrifice the benefits they received from our commerce, because we made peace with France, asserted and maintained our impartial neutrality, and stipulated nothing inconsistent with their rights, honor, or dignity? If such chimerical fears as these were to govern our conduct, it was idle to talk of our independence. We might as well petition the king and parliament of Great Britain to take us again under their gracious protection.

In page 36, he says, I "might secretly and confidentially have nominated one or more of our ministers actually abroad for the purpose of treating with France; with eventual instructions predicated upon appearances of approaching peace."

Mr. Hamilton had entirely forgot the Constitution of the United States. All nominations must be made to the Senate, and if the President requests, and the Senate enjoins secrecy, secrecy will not be kept. Stephens Thompson Mason was then a member of the Senate; and if he had not been, there were twenty other means of communicating the thing to the public. Had secrecy been requested and enjoined when Mr. Murray was nominated, every man whose emulation was mortified would have had the secret in three hours. But had the secret been kept, Mr. Murray must have gone to Paris with his

full powers, or must have communicated them to Mr. Pichon; the French government must have appointed a minister to treat with him; their full powers must have been exchanged; neither the French government nor their ministers would have kept it secret. And why all this cunning? That we might not give umbrage to England. This very motive, if there had been any thing in it, would have induced the French to proclaim it to all Europe. In truth, such a sneaking idea never entered my brain, and if it had, I would have spurned it as unworthy a moment's consideration. Besides, this would have been the very indirect, circuitous mode that Mr. Hamilton so deeply deplores.

In page 37, another instance is given of my jealousy and suspicious disposition. The most open, unsuspicious man alive is accused of excessive suspicion!

I transiently asked one of the heads of departments, whether Ellsworth and Hamilton had come all the way from Windsor and New York to persuade me to countermand the mission. How came Mr. Hamilton to be informed of this?[1]

I know of no motive of Mr. Ellsworth's journey. However, I have already acknowledged that Mr. Ellsworth's conduct was perfectly proper.[2] He urged no influence or argument for counteracting or postponing the mission.

Unsuspicious as I was, I could not resist the evidence of my senses. Hamilton, unasked, had volunteered his influence with all the arguments his genius could furnish, all the eloquence he possessed, and all the vehemence of action his feeble frame could exert. He had only betrayed his want of information, and his ardent zeal to induce me to break my word and violate the faith of the government. I know of no business he had at Trenton. Indeed I knew, that in strict propriety he had no right to come to Trenton at all without my leave. He was stationed at Newark, in the command of his division of the army, where he ought to have been employed in accommodating, disciplining, and teaching tactics to his troops, if he had

[1] The question is now answered. The cabinet member disclosed it. Gibbs's *Federal Administrations*, vol. ii. pp. 397, 422.

[2] In the first draught is the following addition, —

"Mr. Adams never suspected him to be in combination with Mr. Hamilton to endeavor to influence him in the affair of the mission."

There is reason to believe that he was in combination at least with Mr. Pickering and Mr. Wolcott, if not Mr. Hamilton.

been capable of it. He wisely left these things to another officer, who understood them better, but whom he hated for that very reason.

I have no more to say upon this great subject. Indeed, I am weary of exposing puerilities that would disgrace the awkwardest boy at college.

XVII.

Mr. Hamilton says, my "conduct in the office of President was a heterogeneous compound of right and wrong, of wisdom and error." As at that time, in my opinion, his principal rule of right and wrong, of wisdom and error, was his own ambition and indelicate pleasures, I despise his censure, and should consider his approbation as a satire on my administration.

"The outset," he says, "was distinguished by a speech which his friends lamented as temporizing. It had the air of a lure for the favor of his opponents at the expense of his sincerity." Until I read this, I never heard one objection to that speech; and I have never heard another since, except in a letter from a lady, who said she did not like it, because there was but one period in it, and that period was too long. I fully agreed to that lady's opinion, and now thank her for her criticism. Since that time I have never heard nor read, except in Wood's History, any objection or criticism.

That address was dictated by the same spirit which produced my conference the next day with Mr. Jefferson, in which I proposed to him the idea of sending him to France, and the more serious thought of nominating Mr. Madison. It sprung from a very serious apprehension of danger to our country, and a sense of injustice to individuals, from that arbitrary and exclusive principle of faction which confines all employments and promotions to its own favorites. There is a distinction founded in truth and nature, between party and faction. The former is founded in principle and system, concerning the public good; the latter in private interest and passions. An honest party man will never exclude talents and virtues, and qualities eminently useful to the public, merely on account of a difference in

opinion. A factious man will exclude every man alike, saint or sinner, who will not be a blind, passive tool. If I had been allowed to follow my own ideas, Hamilton and Burr, in my opinion, with submission to Divine Providence, would have been alive at this hour; General Muhlenberg, of Pennsylvania, would have been a Brigadier, under Hamilton, in the army, as long as it lasted; and the great body of Germans in Pennsylvania, instead of being disgraced with imputations of rebellion, would have been good friends of government. I have not room to develop all this at present.

But I soon found myself shackled. The heads of departments were exclusive patriots. I could not name a man who was not devoted to Hamilton, without kindling a fire.[1] The Senate was now decidedly federal. During President Washington's whole administration of eight years, his authority in the Senate was extremely weak. The Senate was equally divided in all great constitutional questions, and in all great questions of foreign relations; and such as were the most sharply contested were brought to my decision as Vice-President. When I was elected, the States had been pleased to make an entire change in the Senate. Two thirds of that honorable body were now decidedly federal. And prosperity had its usual effect on federal minds. It made them confident and presumptuous. I soon found that if I had not the previous consent of the heads of departments, and the approbation of Mr. Hamilton, I run the utmost risk of a dead negative in the Senate. One such negative, at least, I had, after a very formal and a very uncivil remonstrance of one of their large, unconstitutional committees in secret.

I have great reason to believe, that Mr. Jefferson came into office with the same spirit that I did, that is, with a sincere desire of conciliating parties, as far as he possibly could, con-

[1] Mr. Stoddert, in a private letter, remonstrated against being classed in this manner. He expresses himself thus respecting Hamilton:

"As to General Hamilton, I scarcely knew him; and perhaps my crime as to him was, that though believing highly of the brilliancy of his talents, and of his sincere patriotism and honorable principles, I never entertained a very exalted opinion of his discretion or the solidity of his judgment, and always thought it an unfortunate circumstance for the federal party, and of course, for the country, (for I believe the views of that party have always been directed to the best interests of the country) that the opinions of this gentleman were deemed so oracular."

Mr. Stoddert did not become Secretary of the Navy until June, 1798.

sistently with his principles. But he soon found, as I did, that the Senate had a decided majority of republicans, five or six to one, a much greater majority than there was in my time of federalists, which was never more than two to one.

In the House of Representatives, in Mr. Washington's time, the majority of federalists was very small. In my time, it was somewhat larger, but still small. In Mr. Jefferson's time, the majority of republicans was immense, two or three, or four, to one. Consciousness of this strength had the same effect upon republicans as it had upon the federalists in my time. It made them confident, exclusive, and presumptuous. Mr. Jefferson found it impossible, as I did, to follow his own inclination on many occasions.

It may be thought presumption in me to impute errors to the nation; but, as I have never concealed from the people any truth which it was important to them to know, nor any opinion of my own, which was material in public affairs, I hope to be excused if I suggest, that the general sentiment in most parts of the continent, that all the danger to liberty arises from the executive power, and that the President's office cannot be too much restrained, is an error.

Corruption in almost all free governments has begun and been first introduced in the legislature. When any portion of executive power has been lodged in popular or aristocratical assemblies, it has seldom, if ever, failed to introduce intrigue. The executive powers lodged in the Senate are the most dangerous to the Constitution, and to liberty, of all the powers in it.[1] The people, then, ought to consider the President's office as the indispensable guardian of their rights. I have ever, therefore, been of opinion, that the electors of President ought to be chosen by the people at large. The people cannot be too careful in the choice of their Presidents; but when they have chosen them, they ought to expect that they will act their own independent judgments, and not be wheedled nor intimidated by factious combinations of senators, representatives, heads of departments, or military officers.

The exclusive principle which has been adopted and too openly avowed by both our great divisions, when the pendulum

[1] The tendencies of the present day render this prediction worthy to be kept in mind.

has swung to their side, is a principle of faction, and not of honest party. It is intolerance! It is despotism! It destroys the freedom of the press! the freedom of elections! the freedom of debate! the freedom of deliberation! the freedom of private judgment! And as long as the Senate shall be determined to negative all but their own party, the President can have no will or judgment of his own. I most earnestly entreat all parties to reconsider their resolutions on this subject.

XVIII.

In page 29, Mr. Hamilton says, "When an ordinary man dreams himself to be a Frederick," &c.

To this I shall make but a short answer. When a Miss of the street shall print a pamphlet in London, and call the Queen of England an ordinary woman who dreams herself a Catharine of Russia, no Englishman will have the less esteem for his queen for that impudent libel.

There is something in the 24th page of a graver complexion. It is said, that "the session which ensued the promulgation of the despatches of our commissioners was about to commence." This was the session of 1798. "Mr. Adams arrived at Philadelphia. The tone of his mind seemed to have been raised."

Let me ask a candid public, how did Mr. Hamilton know any thing of the *tone* of Mr. Adams's mind, either before or at that conference? To make the comparison, he must have known the state of Mr. Adams's mind at both these periods. He had never conversed with Mr. Adams before, nor was he present at that conference. Who was the musician that took the pitch of Mr. Adams's mind, at the two moments here compared together? And what was the musical instrument, or whose exquisite ear was it, that ascertained so nicely the vibrations of the air, and Mr. Adams's sensibility to them? Had Mr. Hamilton a spy in the cabinet, who transmitted to him, from day to day, the confidential communications between the President and heads of department? If there existed such a spy, why might he not communicate these conferences to Mr. Liston, or the Marquis Yrujo, as well as to Mr. Hamilton? He had as clear a right. I believe that all the privy counsellors of the

world but our own are under an oath of secrecy; and ours ought to be. But as they are not, their own honor and sense of propriety ought, with them, to be obligations as sacred as an oath.[1]

The truth is, I had arrived at Philadelphia from a long journey, which had been delayed longer than I intended, very much fatigued; and as no time was to be lost, I sent for the heads of departments to consult, in the evening, upon the points to be inserted in the speech to Congress, who were soon to meet.

My intention was, in the language of the lawyers, merely to break the questions, or meet the points necessary for us to consider; not intending to express any opinion of my own, or to request any opinion of theirs upon any point; but merely to take the questions into their consideration, and give me their advice upon all of them at a future meeting.

I observed that I found, by various sources of information, and particularly by some of the newspapers in Boston and New York, that there was a party who expected an unqualified recommendation of a declaration of war against France.

These paragraphs, I was well satisfied, were written by gentlemen who were in the confidence and correspondence of Hamilton, and one of the heads of departments at least, though I gave them no intimation of this.

I said to the gentlemen, that I supposed it would be expected of us, that we should consider this question, and be able to give our reasons for the determination, whatever it might be.

The conduct of the gentlemen upon this question was such as I wished it to be upon all the others. No one of them gave an opinion either for or against a declaration of war. There was something, however, in the total silence and reserve of all of them, and in the countenances of some, that appeared to me to be the effect of disappointment. It seemed to me, that they expected I should have proposed a declaration of war, and only asked their advice to sanction it. However, not a word was said.

That there was a disappointment, however, in Hamilton and his friends, is apparent enough from this consideration, that

[1] All this is now cleared up by Mr. Gibbs, and by the works of Mr. Hamilton. The information furnished by three of the cabinet ministers seems to have been continuous and complete.

when it was known that a declaration of war was not to be recommended in the President's speech, a caucus was called of members of Congress, to see if they could not get a vote for a declaration of war, without any recommendation from the President, as they had voted the alien and sedition law, and the army.[1] What passed in that caucus, and how much zeal there was in some, and who they were, Judge Sewall can tell better than I. All that I shall say is, that Mr. Hamilton's friends could not carry the vote.[2]

My second proposition to the heads of departments was to consider, in case we should determine against a declaration of war, what was the state of our relations with France, and whether any further attempt at negotiation should be made.

Instead of the silence and reserve with which my first question was received, Mr. Hamilton shall relate what was said.

Mr. Hamilton says, "It was suggested to him (Mr. Adams) that it might be expedient to insert in the speech a sentiment of this import; that, after the repeatedly rejected advances of this country, its dignity required that it should be left with France in future to make the first overture; that if, desirous of reconciliation, she should evince the disposition by sending a minister to this government, he would be received with the respect due to his character, and treated with in the frankness of a sincere desire of accommodation. The suggestion was received in a manner both indignant and intemperate."

I demand again, how did Mr. Hamilton obtain this information? Had he a spy in the cabinet? If he had, I own I had

[1] In the fragment of 1801, it is said,—

"The truth is that at a private meeting of the federalists in Congress the question was considered, but a majority were against a declaration of war. This question was debated with heat, and here began, some time before the nomination of Mr. Murray to France, the serious schism. The minority who urged a declaration of war were outrageous when they found the President apparently fall in with the judgment of the majority."

[2] Mr. Stoddert in his private letter considers the result of this caucus as having been decisive of the policy of the country. He says;—

"A majority of a caucus composed entirely of federal members of the two Houses, would not agree to a declaration of war; and the result of that meeting showed too plainly to be mistaken by the President, that it was his duty to avail himself of the first fair opportunity that presented, for seeking reconciliation without debasement. The democratic party certainly was averse to war with France; so was the federal party, if war could be avoided without dishonor. In this view of the subject, and to my understanding it is the true one, I cannot conceive how you could have avoided instituting a negotiation, on the receipt of Mr. Murray's letter."

rather that all the courts in Europe should have had spies there; for they could have done no harm by any true information they could have obtained there; whereas Hamilton has been able to do a great deal of mischief by the pretended information he has published.[1]

It is very true, that I thought this proposition intended to close the avenues to peace, and to ensure a war with France; for I did believe that some of the heads of departments were confident, in their own minds, that France would not send a minister here.

From the intimate intercourse between Hamilton and some of the heads of departments, which is demonstrated to the world and to posterity by this pamphlet, I now appeal to every candid and impartial man, whether there is not reason to suspect and to believe, whether there is not a presumption, a violent presumption, that Hamilton himself had furnished this machine to his correspondent in the cabinet,[2] for the very purpose of ensnaring me, at unawares, of ensuring a war with France, and enabling him to mount his hobby-horse, the command of an army of fifty thousand, ten thousand of them to be horse.

Hamilton says, "the suggestion was received in a manner both indignant and intemperate." This is false. It is true, it was urged with so much obstinacy, perseverance, and indecency, not to say intemperance, that at last I declared I would not adopt it, in clear and strong terms.[3]

[1] The information was furnished by O. Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, whom Mr. Adams never suspected. Mr. Hamilton states this explicitly in a letter published in Mr. Gibbs's book, vol. ii. p. 422. It is not in Hamilton's works.

[2] The fact seems to be admitted by Mr. Gibbs in his late work, vol. ii. p. 186.

[3] This appears more in detail in the earlier fragment.

"The truth must be told. There were some in America, though but a few, among Mr. Hamilton's friends in Boston especially, who were desirous the President in his speech should recommend to Congress an immediate declaration of war. This question was considered by the President and heads of department in secret. Some things were said, but no clear opinion, that is remembered, expressed by any one. The President, after some time, made an observation or two unnecessary to be repeated, which discovered the tendency of his opinion, and all the heads of department acquiesced in the conclusion to leave the subject wholly out of the address. A proposition was then made, the words of which are not remembered, but the substance was a commitment of the President to a declaration that he would send no more ministers to France. The President was decidedly against this, and declared he would not commit himself. The proposition was not received in any manner, either indignant or intemperate. The manner in which it was urged, repeated, and insisted on, was so indecent, that at last Mr. Adams expressed his ultimate determination in

Mr. Hamilton says, "Mr. Adams declared, as a sentiment he had adopted on mature reflection, that if France should send a minister here to-morrow, he would order him back the day after."

Here I ask again, where, how, and from whom did he get this information. Was it from his spy in the cabinet? Or was it the fabrication of his own "sublimated, eccentric,"[1] and intemperate imagination? In either case, it is an entire misrepresentation.

I said that, when in my retirement at Quincy, the idea of the French government sending a minister here had sometimes occurred to me, my first thoughts were, that I would send him back the next day after his arrival, as a retaliation for their sending ours back; and because the affront offered to us had been at Paris, publicly, in the face of all Europe, the atonement ought to be upon the same theatre; and because, as the French government had publicly and officially declared that they would

strong terms. Mr. Adams observed, that when the idea of the French sending a minister here was first made public, as it had been by Dr. Logan, Mr. Barlow, and many others, his first feelings were against receiving him. He thought, as the insult had been offered in Paris, the reparation ought to be in Paris; that Europe, which had witnessed the affront, should also witness the apology. He further mentioned the inconveniences which would arise from conducting the negotiation at Philadelphia. Nothing could be kept secret; the French would let out what they pleased. Our Jacobins would be clamorous and insolent, taking the part of the French minister against their own government, as they had done in Mr. Washington's time. Considering all those things, Mr. Adams said his first thought was, that if a French minister arrived, he should be rejected, as Mr. Pinckney had been; but upon further reflection he did not see how it could be reconciled to principles, for the right of embassy ought to be respected even in time of war. His ultimate determination, therefore, was to leave the door wide open for negotiation. Accordingly, he inserted in his speech these words: 'It is peace that we have uniformly and perseveringly cultivated, and harmony between us and France may be restored at her option. But to send another minister without more determinate assurances that he would be received, would be an act of humiliation to which the United States ought not to submit. It must, therefore, be left with France, if she is indeed desirous of accommodation, to take the requisite steps. The United States will steadily observe the maxims by which they have been hitherto governed. They will respect the sacred right of embassy.' This is the paragraph which was ultimately inserted, and Mr. Adams's resolution in support of it has had the most happy and important effects; and every man in the cabinet who opposed it, ought now, instead of boasting of his error, to be ashamed of it."

[1] It is a curious fact, that one of his own friends, Gouverneur Morris, should, in substance, affirm the same thing of Mr. Hamilton himself, which he affirmed both of Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson.

"Our poor friend Hamilton bestrode his hobby to the great annoyance of his friends, and not without injury to himself. More a theoretic than a practical man, he was not sufficiently convinced that a system may be good in itself, and bad in relation to particular circumstances." *Life of G. Morris*, vol. iii. p. 216.

receive no minister plenipotentiary from the United States until the President had made apologies for his speeches and answers to addresses, they ought to be made to retract and take back that rash declaration on the same spot where it had been made. They might send a minister here consistently with that offensive declaration. This was my first thought; but upon mature reflection I saw that this would not be justifiable; for to retaliate one breach of principle by another breach of principle, was neither the morality nor the policy that had been taught me by my father and my tutors. Our principle was, that the right of embassy was sacred. I would therefore sacredly respect it, if they sent a minister here. But I would not foreclose myself from sending a minister to France, if I saw an opening for it consistent with our honor; in short, that I would leave both doors and all doors wide open for a negotiation. All this refutation came from myself, not from the heads of departments.

All that he says in this place and in the beginning of the next page, of my wavering, is false. My mind never underwent any revolution or alteration at all, after I left Quincy. I inserted no declaration in my speech, that I would not send a minister to France, nor any declaration that, if France would give assurances of receiving a minister from this country, I would send one. Nothing like that declaration was ever made, except in my message to Congress, of the 21st of June, 1798, in these words: "I will never send another minister to France, without assurances that he will be received, respected, and honored, as the representative of a great, free, powerful, and independent nation." This declaration finally effected the peace.[1]

[1] From the draught of 1801:

"The measure, from its inception, was never determined on by considerations of war or peace, prosperity or adversity to any of the powers at war in Europe. Mr. Adams, in all his administration, has considered his country as a sovereign, and her affairs as insulated. Peace to America, if attainable on safe and honorable terms, whether war or peace, triumphs or defeats in Europe. Humiliations and reverses in France, Mr. Adams thought, if they were to have any consideration at all, ought rather to accelerate than retard the measures of reconciliation, because they ought to be imputed to generous motives rather than to mean ones, and because he had observed, that great successes had produced an intoxicating effect upon all the belligerent nations in succession.

Mr. Adams desires nothing more than to have the expediency of the measure tested by the state of things, when it had its inception, when the foundation was laid for it in the speech, when Mr. Murray was nominated, and when the envoys

Both the doors of negotiation were left open. The French might send a minister here without conditions; we might send one to France upon condition of a certainty that he would be received in character.

What conduct did the French government hold in consequence of this declaration? They retracted their solemn and official declaration, that they would receive no minister plenipotentiary, in future, from the United States, without apologies from the President for his speeches and answers to addresses. They withdrew, and expressly disavowed, all claims of loans and douceurs, which had been held up in a very high tone. They even gave encouragement, I might say they promised, to make provision for an equitable compensation for spoliations. They promised to receive our ministers, and they did receive them, and made peace with them,—a peace that completely accomplished a predominant wish of my heart for five-and-twenty years before, which was to place our relations with France and with Great Britain upon a footing of equality and impartiality, that we might be able to preserve, in future, an everlasting neutrality in all the wars of Europe.

I see now with great pleasure, that England professes to acknowledge and adopt this our principle of impartiality, and I hope that France will soon adopt it too. The two powers ought to see, that it is the only principle we can adopt with safety to ourselves or justice to them. If this is an error, it is an error in which I have been invariably and unchangeably fixed for five-and-thirty years, in the whole course of which I have never seen reason to suspect it to be an error, and I now despair of ever discovering any such reasons.

Nevertheless, Mr. Hamilton calls the declaration that accomplished all this "a pernicious declaration!"

Pernicious it was to his views of ambition and domination. It extinguished his hopes of being at the head of a victorious

sailed. If it was not justified then, it never can be justified, whatever may have been its success for Mr. Adams admires the sentiment—

'Careat successibus opto
Quisquis ab eventu facta notanda putat.'

Upon the coolest review and reëxamination, he thinks it the wisest action of his life, and, as he knew the pains that would be taken to defeat it and to render it unpopular, it was the most resolute and the most disinterested."

army of fifty thousand men, without which, he used to say, he had no idea of having a head upon his shoulders for four years longer.

Thus it is, when self-sufficient ignorance impertinently obtrudes itself into offices and departments, in which it has no right, nor color, nor pretence to interfere.

Thus it is, when ambition undertakes to sacrifice all characters, and the peace of nations, to its own private interest.

I have now finished all I had to say on the negotiations and peace with France in 1800.

In the mean time, when I look back on the opposition and embarrassments I had to overcome, from the faction of British subjects, from that large body of Americans who revere the English and abhor the French, from some of the heads of departments, from so many gentlemen in Senate, and so many more in the House of Representatives, and from the insidious and dark intrigues as well as open remonstrances of Mr. Hamilton, I am astonished at the event.

In some of my jocular moments I have compared myself to an animal I have seen take hold of the end of a cord with his teeth, and be drawn slowly up by pullies, through a storm of squibs, crackers, and rockets, flashing and blazing round him every moment; and though the scorching flames made him groan, and mourn, and roar, he would not let go his hold till he had reached the ceiling of a lofty theatre, where he hung some time, still suffering a flight of rockets, and at last descended through another storm of burning powder, and never let go till his four feet were safely landed on the floor.

In some of my social hours I have quoted Virgil:

Fata obstant, placidasque viri Deus obstruit aures.
Ac velut, annoso validam cum robore quercum
Alpini Boreæ nunc hinc nunc flatibus illinc
Eruere inter se certant; it stridor; et alte
Consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes;
Ipsa hæret scopulis; et quantum vertice ad auras
Ætherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit;
Haud secus assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros
Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas.
Mens immota manet; lacrimæ volvuntur inanes.

Lib. 4. 440.

His hardened heart nor prayers nor threatenings move;
Fate and the Gods had stopp'd his ears . . . .
As when the winds their airy quarrel try,
Justling from every quarter of the sky;
This way and that the mountain oak they bend,
His boughs they shatter, and his branches rend;
With leaves and falling mast they spread the ground.
The hollow vallies to the echo sound;
Unmov'd, the sturdy plant their fury mocks,
Or shaken, clings more closely to the rocks;
Far as he shoots his towering head on high,
So deep in earth his deep foundations lie;
No less a storm the Trojan hero bears;
Thick messages and loud complaints he hears,
And bandied words still beating on his ears.
Sighs, groans, and tears, proclaim his inward pains,
But the firm purpose of his heart remains.

Dryden, B. 4. 636.

But this is all levity. There have been sober hours, not a few; and I know not that there has been one in which I have not adored that providence of Almighty God, which alone could have carried me safely through, to a successful issue, this transaction, and so many others equally difficult, and infinitely more dangerous to my life, if not to my reputation.

Quincy, 10 June, 1809.

THE

INADMISSIBLE PRINCIPLES

OF THE

KING OF ENGLAND'S PROCLAMATION

OF OCTOBER 16, 1807, CONSIDERED.

THIS letter, in the date of its publication in the Boston Patriot, precedes those which have gone before. It was subsequently published in a pamphlet with the above title. It is placed in this order, because it is connected with the history of later events.

The difficulties with Great Britain, which led to the adoption of the act of embargo, of 1808, by the Congress of the United States, incidentally opened a new subject of difference between Mr. Pickering and Mr. Adams. Mr. Pickering was then a senator of the United States from Massachusetts, and in that capacity published, in the form of a letter addressed to Governor Sullivan, an appeal to the people of the State against that measure. In the course of it he alluded to the proclamation of the King of England, which constituted one great cause of difficulty, in the terms which are quoted, and which form the text of the following paper. The letter of the 26th of December, alluded to at the commencement, was addressed to J. B. Varnum, then a member of the House of Representatives from Massachusetts. It may be found in the general correspondence.

Quincy, 9 January, 1809.

In my letter of the 26th of December, it was remarked that the proclamation for pressing seamen from our merchant ships had not been sufficiently reprobated. Some of the reasons

for that opinion will be found in the following commentaries, which were written for private amusement, within a few days after the appearance in public of this

TEXT.

"*The proclamation of the King of Great Britain, requiring the return of his subjects, the seamen especially, from foreign countries, to aid in this hour of peculiar danger, in defence of their own* . . . .

"*But it being an acknowledged principle, that every nation has a right to the service of its subjects in time of war, that proclamation could not furnish the slightest ground for an embargo.*"

This partial description has a tendency to deceive many, and no doubt has deceived thousands. *It is concealing the asp in a basket of figs.* The dangerous, alarming, and fatal part of the proclamation is kept carefully out of sight.

Proclamations of one kind are of immemorial usage; but the present one is the first of the kind. Proclamations of the first kind, issued usually in the beginning of a war, are in effect but simple invitations to subjects, who happen to be abroad, to return home. To deny the right of the king to issue them, would be as unreasonable as to deny his right to send a card of invitation to one of his subjects to dine with him on St. George's day; but in neither case is the subject bound by law to accept the invitation. As it is natural to every human mind to sympathize with its native country when in distress or danger, it is well known that considerable numbers of British commonly return home from various foreign countries, in consequence of these invitations by proclamation. The British ambassadors, consuls, agents, governors, and other officers give the proclamations a general circulation, stimulate the people to return, and contrive many means to encourage and facilitate their passages. All this is very well. All this is within the rules of modesty, decency, law, and justice. No reasonable man will object to it. But none of these proclamations, till this last, ever asserted a right to take British subjects, by force, from the ships of foreign nations, any more than from the cities and provinces of foreign nations. On the other hand, it is equally clear, that British subjects in foreign countries are under no indispensable obligation of religion, morality, law, or policy, to return, in compliance

with such proclamations. No penalty is annexed by English laws to any neglect; no, nor to any direct or formal disobedience. Hundreds, in fact, do neglect and disobey the proclamations, to one who complies with them. Thousands who have formed establishments and settled families, or become naturalized, or made contracts, or enlisted on board merchant ships, or even ships of war, in foreign countries, pay no regard to these orders or invitations of their former sovereign. Indeed, all who have become naturalized in foreign countries, or entered into contracts of any kind, public or private, with governments or merchants, farmers or manufacturers, have no right to return until they have fulfilled their covenants and obligations. The President of the United States has as legal authority to issue similar proclamations, and they would be as much respected by American citizens all over the globe. But every American would say his compliance was voluntary, and none, whose engagements abroad were incompatible with compliance, would obey.

But "it is an acknowledged principle, that every nation has a *right* to the service of its subjects in time of war." By whom is this principle acknowledged? By no man, I believe, in the unlimited sense in which it is here asserted. With certain qualifications and restrictions it may be admitted. Within the realm and in his own dominions the king has a right to the service of his subjects, at sea and on land, by voluntary enlistments, and to send them abroad on foreign voyages, expeditions, and enterprises; but it would be difficult to prove the right of any executive authority of a free people to compel free subjects into service by conscriptions or impressments, like galley-slaves, at the point of the bayonet, or before the mouths of field artillery. Extreme cases and imperious necessity, it is said, have no laws; but such extremities and necessity must be very obvious to the whole nation, or freemen will not comply. Impressments of seamen from British merchantmen, in port or at sea, are no better than the conscriptions of soldiers by Napoleon, or Louis XIV. who set him the example.

So much for that part of the proclamation, which the text produces to public view. Now for the other part, which it has artfully concealed. The king not only commands his subjects to return, but he commands the officers of his navy to search the

merchant ships of neutrals (meaning Americans, for it is not applicable to any others, nor intended to be applied to any others,) and impress all British seamen they find on board, without regard to any allegations of naturalization; without regard to any certificates of citizenship; without regard to any contracts, covenants, or connections they have formed with captains or owners; and without regard to any marriages, families, or children they may have in America. And in what principle or law is this founded? Is there any law of God to support it? Is there any law of nature to justify it? Is there any law of England to authorize it? Certainly not. The laws of England have no binding force on board American ships, more than the laws of China or Japan. The laws of the United States alone, of which the law of nations is a part, have dominion over our merchant ships. In what law, then, is it grounded? In the law of nations? It is a counterfeit foisted into that law, by this arbitrary, fraudulent proclamation, for the first time. Such a title, as *Impressment of Seamen*, was never found in any code of laws, since the first canoe was launched into the sea; not even in that of England. Whoever claims a right, must produce a law to support it. But this proclamation attempts to transfer a pretended right of impressing seamen from their own ships, which, in truth, is only an enormous abuse, to the impressment of seamen from foreign nations, foreign ships, and foreign subjects. The horror of this gross attempt, this affront to our understandings as well as feelings, this contempt of our natural and national resentment of injuries, as well as of our sympathies with fellow-citizens and fellow-creatures, suffering the vilest oppression under inhumanity and cruelty, could never have appeared in the world, had not the spirits of Lord Bute and Lord George Germaine risen again at St. James's.

It is in vain for the Britons to say, these men are the king's subjects. How are they the king's subjects? By British laws. And what are the British laws to us, on the high seas? No more than the laws of Otaheite. We Americans must say, they are our fellow-citizens by our laws. They have sworn allegiance to the United States. We have admitted them to all the rights and privileges of American citizens, and by this admission have contracted with them to support and defend them in the enjoyment of all such rights. Our laws acknowledge no

divine right of kings greater than those of subjects, nor any indefeasible duty of subjects, more than that of kings, to obedience. These remnants of feudal tyranny and ecclesiastical superstition have been long since exploded in America. The king claims them, to make them slaves. The President of the United States claims them, as it is his duty to do, by his office and his oath, not to enslave them, but to protect them and preserve them free. Our laws are as good as British laws. Our citizens have as good a right to protection as British subjects, and our government is as much bound to afford it.

What is impressment of seamen? It is no better than what the civilians call *plagiat*, a crime punishable with death by all civilized nations, as one of the most audacious and punishable offences against society. It was so considered among the Hebrews. "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." Exodus xxi. 16. "If a man be found stealing any of his brethren, then that thief shall die." Deuteronomy xxiv. 7. The laws of Athens, like those of the Hebrews, condemned the plagiary or man-stealer to death; and the laws of Rome pronounced the same judgment against the same outrage. But to descend from the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans to the British; what is the impressment of seamen in England, by their own laws, in their own ports, from their own ships within the four seas, or anywhere on the high seas? It is said to be an usage. So were ship-money, loans, and benevolences in the reign of Charles the First; and arguments were used by his courtiers to prove their legality, as plausible and conclusive as any that have been produced by Judge Foster in favor of impressment. It is at best but an abuse, subsisting only by toleration and connivance, like the practice in Holland of *kidnapping* men for settlers or servants in Batavia. It is in direct contradiction and violation of every principle of English liberty. It is a direct violation of Magna Charta, and the fifty-five confirmations of it in parliament, and a bold defiance of all the ecclesiastical execrations against the violators of it. It is in direct violation of all their other statutes, bills, and petitions of right, as well as the Habeas Corpus Act. It deprives free subjects of their liberty, property, and often of their lives, without

alleging or pretending any accusation against them of any crime or fault. It deprives them of the trial by jury, and subjects them to scourges and death by martial law and the judgments of courts-martial. It is a kind of civil war made upon innocent, unoffending subjects. It is said that in a general impressment, like that of Admiral Keppell, it cost the nation, in cutters, luggers, press-gangs, and it might have been added, Nanny-houses and rendezvous of debauchery and corruption, a hundred pounds for every man they obtained. The practice is not avowed or acknowledged by the nation. No parliament ever dared to legitimate or sanction it. No court of law ever dared to give a judgment in favor of it. No judge or lawyer that ever I heard of, till Foster, ever ventured to give a private opinion to encourage it.

Thurlow, when he was Chancellor, hazarded a saying to a committee of the city of London, that the practice of impressment of seamen was legal; but the committee answered him respectfully, but firmly, though in the presence of the king in council — "We acknowledge the high authority of your lordship's opinion, but we must declare that we are of a very different opinion;" and their answer appeared to be applauded by the nation. Press-gangs are continually opposed and resisted at sea by the sailors, whenever they have the means or the least hope of escaping. Navy officers and men are sometimes killed, and there is no inquisition for their blood. As little noise as possible is made about it. It is known to be justifiable homicide to take the life of an assailant in the necessary defence of a man's liberty. There is not a jury in England who would find a verdict of murder or manslaughter against any sailor, on land or at sea, who should kill any one of a press-gang in the necessary defence of his liberty from impressment. Press-gangs on shore are often resisted by the people, fired on, some of them wounded and sometimes killed. Yet no inquisition is made for this. The practice is held in abhorrence by the men-of-war's-men themselves. The boatswain of the *Rose* frigate, after the acquittal of the four Irish sailors, who were prosecuted in a special court of admiralty at Boston, for killing a gallant and amiable officer, Lieutenant Panton, said, "This is a kind of work in which I have been almost constantly engaged for twenty years, *i. e.*, in fighting with honest sailors, to deprive

them of their liberty. I always suspected that I ought to be hanged for it, but now I know it."

Since I have alluded to this case, it may not be amiss to recollect some other circumstances of it. A press-gang from the *Rose*, commanded by Lieutenant Panton, with a midshipman and a number of ordinary seamen, visited and searched a merchant-ship from Marblehead, belonging to Mr. Hooper, at sea. The lieutenant inquired if any English, Irish, or Scotchmen were on board. Not satisfied with the answer he received, he prepared to search the ship from stem to stern. At last he found four Irishmen retired and concealed in the forepeak. With swords and pistols he immediately laid siege to the inclosure, and summoned the men to surrender. Corbet, who had the cool intrepidity of a Nelson, reasoned, remonstrated, and laid down the law with the precision of a Mansfield. "I know who you are. You are the lieutenant of a man-of-war, come with a press-gang to deprive me of my liberty. You have no right to impress me. I have retreated from you as far as I can. I can go no farther. I and my companions are determined to stand upon our defence. Stand off." The sailors within and without employed their usual language to each other, and a midshipman, in the confusion, fired a pistol into the forepeak, and broke an arm of one of the four. Corbet, who stood at the entrance, was engaged in a contest of menaces and defiances with the lieutenant. He repeated what he had before said, and marking a line with a harpoon in the salt, with which the ship was loaded, said, "You are determined to deprive me of my liberty, and I am determined to defend it. If you step over that line, I shall consider it as a proof that you are determined to impress me, and by the eternal God of Heaven, you are a dead man." "Aye, my lad," said the lieutenant, "I have seen many a brave fellow before now." Taking his snuff-box out of his pocket, and taking a pinch of snuff, he very deliberately stepped over the line, and attempted to seize Corbet. The latter, drawing back his arm, and driving his harpoon with all his force, cut off the carotid artery and jugular vein, and laid the lieutenant dead at his feet. The *Rose* sent a reënforcement to the press-gang. They broke down the bulk-head, and seized the four Irishmen, and brought them to trial for piracy and murder. The court consisted of

Governor Bernard, Governor Wentworth, Chief Justice Hutchinson, Judge Auchmuty, Commodore Hood himself, who then commanded all the ships of war on the station, now a peer of the British empire, and twelve or fifteen others, counsellors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. After the trial, the President, Governor Bernard, pronounced the judgment of the court, that the act of the prisoners was justifiable homicide, and in this opinion the whole court was unanimous.[1] The sailor who was wounded in the arm, brought an action against the midshipman, and Commodore Hood himself interposed and made compensation to the sailor, to his satisfaction, after which the action was withdrawn. Such was the impressment of seamen, as it stood, by law, before our revolution. The author of my text, then, carries his courtly complaisance to the English government, farther than the Governors Bernard and Hutchinson, and even than Lord Hood carried it, when we were a part of the British empire. He thinks, that, as every nation has a right to the service of its subjects, in time of war, the proclamation of the King of Great Britain, commanding his naval officers to practise such impressments on board, not the vessels of his own subjects, but of the United States, a foreign nation, could not furnish the slightest ground for an embargo! It is not necessary for me to say, that any thing could furnish a sufficient ground for an embargo, for any long time; this, I leave to the responsibility of our President, senators, and representatives in Congress. But, I say, with confidence, that it furnished a sufficient ground for *a declaration of war*. Not the murder of Pierce, nor all the murders on board the Chesapeake, nor all the other injuries and insults we have received from foreign nations, atrocious as they have been, can be of such dangerous, lasting, and pernicious consequence to this country, as this proclamation, if we have servility enough to submit to it.

What would the author of my text have advised? Would he counsel the President to stipulate, in a treaty with Great Britain, that his navy officers should forever hereafter have a right to visit and search all American merchant-ships, and impress from them all English, Scotch, and Irish seamen? Will he be so

[1] Compare this account with that given by Hutchinson in the third volume of his History, since published, p. 231, likewise with the reflections in the Diary, vol. ii. of this work, p. 224 – 226, also the note and the appendix B.

good as to explain the distinction between ships of war and merchant-ships? Are not merchant-ships under the jurisdiction and entitled to the protection of the laws of their country upon the high seas as much as ships of war? Is not a merchant-ship as much the territory of the United States as a ship of war? Would the author of my text advise the President and Congress to acquiesce, in silence, under this proclamation, and permit it to be executed forever hereafter? Would not such a tame and silent acquiescence as effectually yield the point, and establish the practice, *if not the law*, as an express stipulation in a solemn treaty? If the United States had as powerful a navy as Great Britain, and Great Britain as feeble a force at sea as ours, would he advise the President either to concede the principle by treaty, or acquiesce in it in silence? Does the circumstance of great power or great weakness make any alteration in the principle or the right? Should the captain or crew of an American merchant-man resist a British press-gang on the high seas, and, in defence of their liberty, kill the commander and all under him, and then make their escape, and after returning to Salem be prosecuted, would the writer of my text, as a judge or a juror, give his judgment for finding them guilty of murder or piracy?

Although the embargo was made the watchword in our late elections, the votes, in our greatest nurseries of seamen, for example, in Salem, in Marblehead, in Barnstable, Sandwich, and other places on Cape Cod, in Nantucket, and the Vineyard, and other places, seemed to show, that our seamen preferred *to be embargoed* rather than go to sea *to be impressed.*

No doubt it will be said, that we have nothing to do with the question in England concerning the legality or illegality of impressments. This, as long as they confine the law and the practice to their own territory, to their own ships, and their own seamen, is readily acknowledged. We shall leave them to justify their own usage, whether it is a mere abuse or a legitimate custom, to their own consciences, to their own sense of equity, humanity, or policy. But when they arrogate a right, and presume in fact, to transfer their usurpation to foreign nations, or rather to Americans, whom they presume to distinguish from all other foreign nations, it becomes the interest, the right, and the indispensable duty of our government to inquire into the nefarious nature of it in England, in order to expose the

greater turpitude of it when transferred to us, as well as to oppose and resist it to the utmost of their power; and it is equally the duty of the people to support their government in such opposition to the last extremity.

Permit me now to inquire, what will be the effects of an established law and practice of British impressments of seamen from American ships, upon the commerce, the navigation, and the peace of the United States, *and, above all, upon the hearts and minds of our seamen.*

In considering those innumerable dangers, from winds and seas, rocks and shoals, to which all ships are exposed in their voyages, the owner and master must sit down together in order to determine the number of seamen necessary for the voyage. They must calculate the chances of impressment, and engage a supernumerary list of sailors, that they may be able to spare as many as the British lieutenant shall please to take, and have enough left to secure the safety of the ship and cargo, and above all, the lives of the master and crew. They know not how many British ships of war they may meet, nor how many sailors the conscience of each lieutenant may allow him to impress. For the lieutenant is to be judge, jury, sheriff, and gaoler, to every seaman in American vessels. He is to try many important questions of law and of fact; whether the sailor is a native of America; whether he has been lawfully naturalized in America; whether he is an Englishman, Scotchman, or Irishman; whether he emigrated to America before the revolution or since. Indeed, *no evidence is to be admitted of any naturalization by our laws, in any of the States since the revolution, if before.* In truth, the doctrine of the inherent and indefeasible duty of allegiance is asserted so peremptorily in the proclamation, that the lieutenant may think it his duty to impress every man who was born in the British dominions. It may be the opinion of this learned judge, that the connection between the king and subject is so sacred and divine, that allegiance cannot be dissolved by any treaty the king has made, or even by any act of parliament. *And this pious sentiment may subject us all to impressment at once.* This, however, *en passant.*

The lieutenant is to *order* the captain of the merchant-man to lay before him a list of his crew; he is then to *command* the crew to be ordered, or summoned, or mustered, to pass in review

before him. A tribunal ought to be erected. The lieutenant is to be the judge, possessed of greater authority than the Chief Justice of any of our States, or even than the Chief Justice of the United States. The midshipman is to be clerk, and the boatswain, sheriff or marshal. And who are these lieutenants? Commonly very young gentlemen, the younger sons of wealthy families, who have procured their commissions to give them an honorable living, instead of putting them apprentices to trade, merchandise, law, physic, or divinity. Their education, their experience, their manners, their principles, are so well known, that I shall say nothing of them. Lord Keppel said, that he knew the maxim of British seamen to be, "*to do no right and receive no wrong.*" The principles of the officers I believe to be somewhat better; but in this they all seem to agree, officers and men, and their present ministry seem to be of the same opinion, that the world was made for the British nation, and that all nature and nations were created for the dignity and omnipotence of the British navy.

It is impossible to figure to ourselves, in imagination, this solemn tribunal and venerable judge, without smiling, till the humiliation of our country comes into our thoughts, and interrupts the sense of ridicule, by the tears of grief or vengeance.

> "High on a splendid seat, which far outshone
> Henley's gilt tub, or Flecnoe's Irish throne" —

the *lieutenant* examines the countenance, the gait and air of every seaman. Like the sage of old, commands him to speak "that he may know him." He pronounces his accent and dialect to be that of the Scotch, Irish, West Country, Yorkshire, Welsh, Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, or Sark. Many native Americans are the descendants of emigrants from all these countries, and retain a tincture of the language and pronunciation of their fathers and grandfathers. These will be decided to be the king's subjects. Many will be found to be emigrants or the descendants of emigrants from Germany, Holland, Sweden, France, Spain, Portugal, or Italy. These will be adjudged by the lieutenant not to be native Americans. They will be thought to have no friends in America who will care enough for them to make much noise, and these will be impressed. If there should be any natives or sons of natives of any of the West India Islands, or of any part of the East Indies,

where the king is said to have thirty millions of subjects, these must all be impressed, for conquest confers the indelible character of subjects as well as birth. But if neither English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Italian, German, Dutchman, Spaniard, Portuguese, East or West India man is found, the *reverend lieutenant* will think, if he is prudent enough not to say, *Jura negat sibi lata, nihil non arrogat armis.* "Our ship is so weakly manned, that we cannot fight an enemy; we cannot even navigate her in safety in bad weather. *Procul a Jove, procul a fulmine.* I will take as many native Americans as I please. It will be long before I can be called to account; and at last, I can say that I saved the king's ship, and perhaps beat a Frenchman, by the aid of this meritorious impressment, and I am sure of friends who will not only bring me off, but obtain a promotion for me even for this patriotic action." How many American ships and cargoes will be sunk in the sea, or driven on shore, wrecked and lost; how many masters and remaining sailors will be buried in the oceans for want of the assistance of the men thus kidnapped and stolen, no human foresight can calculate. It is, however, easy to predict that the number must be very great. These considerations, it seems, have no weight in the estimation of the British ministry. Their hearts are not taught to feel another's woe. But all these things the captain and owner of an American merchant-ship must take into consideration, and make the subjects of calculation before they can venture to sea. In short, there should be a corporation erected in every State for the express purpose of insuring against impressment of seamen. In a course of time and experience the chances might be calculated, so that the insurers and insured might at a great expense be secure. But the poor sailors can never be safe.

The law must be settled, or remain unsettled. If such impressments are determined to be legal, either by treaty or by acquiescence in the King's Proclamation, it will establish in the minds of British seamen a pride of superiority and a spirit of domination, and in the minds of American seamen a consciousness of inferiority and a servile spirit of submission, that ages will not eradicate. If the question is allowed to remain undetermined, American seamen will fight in defence of their liberty whenever they see the smallest prospect of escaping, and some-

times when there is none. They will kill and be killed. Some will be punished for their resistance on board the British men of war; and some may be carried to a British port and there be prosecuted for piracy and murder. This, however, will seldom or ever be done; for I still believe there is sense and justice enough in the British nation and their juries to acquit any seaman, American or British, who should kill a press-gang in defence of his liberty; but if he should escape and return to America, and be here prosecuted, I will not believe there is a judge or juror on the continent so ignorant of the law, so dead to every sense of justice, so abandoned by every feeling of humanity, as to find him guilty of any crime, if it were proved that he had killed a dozen press-gangs in defence of his freedom. We shall have a continual warfare at sea, like that lately at Canton. Our Secretary of State's office will be filled with representations and complaints. Our nation will be held in a constant state of irritation and fermentation, and our government always distressed between their anxiety to relieve their fellow-citizens, and their inability to serve them.

A republican, who asserts the duty of jealousy, ought to suspect that this proclamation was dictated by a spirit as hostile and malicious as it was insidious, for the determined purpose of depressing the character of our seamen. Take from a sailor his pride and his courage, and he becomes a poor animal indeed; broken-hearted, dejected, depressed even below the standard of other men of his own level in society. A habit of fear will be established in his mind. At the sight of a British man-of-war a panic will seize him; his spirits will sink, and if it be only a cutter or a lugger, he will think of nothing but flight and escape. What but the haughty spirit of their seamen, which has been encouraged and supported for ages by the nation, has given the British navy its superiority over the navies of other nations? "Who shall dare to set bounds to the commerce and naval power of Great Britain?" is the magnificent language of defiance in parliament, and it vibrates and echoes through every heart in the nation. Every British sailor is made to believe himself the master and commander of the world. If the right of impressment is conceded by us, in theory or practice, our seamen's hearts will be broken, and every British seaman will say to every American seaman, as the six nations of Indians

said to the southern tribes, whom they had conquered, "*We have put petticoats on you.*" In such a case many would have too much reason to say, let us no longer rejoice for independence, or think of a navy or free commerce, no longer hope for any rank in the world, but bow our necks again to the yoke of Great Britain.

If the spirit of a man should remain in our sailors, they will sometimes resist. Should a British cutter demand to search an American merchant-ship of five hundred tons burthen, armed as they sometimes are, and have a right to be — the commander of the cutter calls for a muster of the men, in order to impress such as he, in his wisdom, shall judge to be British subjects. Is it credible that the captain and crew of the merchant-man will submit to such usage? No, he will sink the boat, and the cutter too, rather than to be so insulted, and every American must applaud him for his spirit.

Is this right of impressment to be all on one side, or is it to be reciprocal? British modesty may say, "It is an exclusive privilege which we claim, assert, and will maintain, because it is necessary to support our dominion of the seas, which is necessary to preserve the balance of power in Europe against France, and to prevent the French emperor from sending fifty thousand men to conquer the United States of America." All this will not convince American seamen. They will answer, "We think a balance of power on the ocean as necessary as on the continent of Europe. We thank you for your civility in kindly giving us hopes that you will defend us from the French army of fifty thousand men; but we are very willing to take our defence upon ourselves. If you have a right to impress seamen from our ships, we have an equal right to impress from yours." Should one of our gun-boats meet a British East India man, armed with fifty guns — the gun-boat demands a search for American seamen, calls for the muster-roll, commands the men to pass in review before him. Would the East India captain submit? No. He would sooner throw overboard the press-gang and run down the gun-boat. Such will be the perpetual altercations between Britons and Americans at sea, and lay an immovable foundation of eternal hatred between the two nations. The king's proclamation will be found as impolitic a step as ever the court of St. James has taken.

It is said in the context, "the British ships of war, agreeably to a right claimed and exercised for ages — a right claimed and exercised during the whole of the administrations of Washington, of Adams, and of Jefferson, — continue to take some of the British seamen found on board our merchant vessels, and with them a small number of ours, from the impossibility of always distinguishing Englishmen from the citizens of the United States." We have before seen what sort of a right to impress men from their own ships has been claimed, in what manner it has been exercised, and in what light it has been considered by the English nation. It amounts to a right of getting their officers lawfully killed. But surely, no right was ever before claimed to impress men from foreign ships. If such a pretended right was ever exercised, or, in other words, if such a crime was ever committed, I presume it would be no better proof of a legal right than a robbery, burglary, or murder, committed on shore, would prove that such actions are innocent and lawful. To argue from single facts, or a few instances, to a general law, is a sophistry too common with political writers, and is sometimes imputable to compilers of the laws of nations; but none of them ever went to such extravagance as this. No claim or pretension of any right to search foreign vessels for seamen ever existed before our revolution, and no exercise of such a right ever prevailed since, except such as resembles the exercise of the right of committing robbery, burglary, and murder in some of our cities. No "ages" have passed since our revolution. The right was never asserted or claimed till the late proclamation of the king appeared, and that proclamation will make an epoch of disgrace and disaster to one nation or the other, perhaps to both.

From the peace of 1783 to the commencement of our government, under the present national Constitution, whenever any American seamen were impressed they were immediately demanded in the name of the old Congress, and immediately discharged without ever pretending to such right of impressment. During the administration of Washington, whenever information was received of any impressment, immediate orders were sent to demand the men, and the men were promised to be liberated. Washington sent Captain Talbot to the West Indies as an agent to demand seamen impressed on board

British men-of-war. Talbot demanded them of the British commanders, captains, and admirals, and was refused. He went then on shore, and demanded and obtained of the Chief Justice of the island writs of Habeas Corpus, by virtue of which the impressed seamen were brought from the king's ships, and set at liberty by law, the commanders not daring to disobey the king's writ. During the administration of Adams, the Secretary of State's office can show what demands were made, and the success of them. The remonstrances that were made in consequence of positive instructions, and the memorials presented at court by our minister, were conceived in terms as strong as the English language could furnish, without violating that respect and decorum which ought always to be preserved between nations and governments, even in declarations of war. The practice was asserted to be not only incompatible with every principle of justice and every feeling of humanity, but wholly irreconcilable with all thoughts of a continuance of peace and friendship between the two nations. The effect of the memorial was an immediate order to the commanders of the navy to liberate the demanded men. I shall say nothing of Mr. Jefferson's administration, because the negotiations already made public sufficiently show, that he has not been behind either of his predecessors in his zeal for the liberty of American seamen. During all this time, excuses and apologies were made, and necessity was sometimes hinted; but no serious pretension of right was advanced. No. The first formal claim was the king's proclamation. With what propriety, then, can this be called "a *right*, claimed and exercised for ages, and during the whole of the administrations of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson"?

Is there any reason why another proclamation should not soon appear, commanding all the officers of the army in Canada and Nova Scotia to go over the line, and take by force all the king's subjects they can find in our villages? The right would stand upon the same principles; but there is this difference, it would not be executed with so little danger.

A few words more on the subject of pressing. In strictness we have nothing to do with the question, whether impressments of seamen in England are legal or illegal. Whatever iniquity or inhumanity that government may inflict on their own sub-

jects, we have no authority to call them to an account for it. But when they extend that power to us, a foreign nation, it is natural for us, and it is our duty as well as interest, to consider what it is among themselves.

The most remarkable case in which this subject has been touched in Westminster Hall, is in Cowper's Reports, page 512, Rex *vs.* John Tubbs. The report of the case is very long, and I shall only observe, that the question of the legality of the power of impressment was not before the court. The question was, whether the Lord Mayor had a right to exempt thirty or forty watermen for his barges. Lord Mansfield sufficiently expresses his alarm, and his apprehension of the consequences of starting a question relative to the subject, in the following words: "I am very sorry that either of the respectable parties before the court, the city of London on the one hand, or the lords commissioners of the admiralty on the other, have been prevailed upon to agitate this question," &c.

"I was in hopes the court would have had an opportunity of investigating this point to the bottom, instead of being urged to discuss it so instantaneously," &c. "I own I wished for a more deliberate consideration upon this subject; but being prevented of that, I am bound to say what my present sentiments are. *The power of pressing* is founded upon immemorial usage, allowed for ages. If it be so founded, and allowed for ages, it can have no ground to stand upon, nor can it be vindicated or justified by any reason, but the safety of the State; and the *practice* is deduced from that trite maxim of the constitutional law of England, that private mischief had better be submitted to than public detriment and inconvenience should ensue. To be sure, there are instances where private men must give way to the public good; in every case of pressing, every man must be very sorry for the act and for the necessity which gives rise to it. It ought, therefore, to be exercised with the greatest moderation and only upon the most cogent necessity, and though it be a legal *power*, it may, like many others, be abused in the exercise of it."

The case is too long to transcribe; but it is worth reading. My remarks upon it shall be short.

1. Lord Mansfield most manifestly dreaded the question, probably on account of the innumerable difficulties attending it, as well as the national uproar it would most certainly excite.

2. His lordship carefully avoided the use of the word *right*. He knew the sense, force, and power of the word too well to profane that sacred expression by applying it to a practice so loose and undefined, so irregular and capricious, so repugnant to the inherent, hereditary, unalienable and indefeasible birthrights of British subjects.

3. He calls it a *practice* and a *power*, but he does not even venture to call it a prerogative of the crown.

4. He does not even affirm that there exists such an immemorial usage allowed for ages. He says, "if it be so founded and allowed for ages." The existence of such an immemorial usage, allowed for ages, was probably one of the principal points he wished to investigate.

5. He does not affirm that such a custom, usage, power, or practice could be pleaded or given in evidence against Magna Charta. If his lordship had been allowed time to investigate the subject to the bottom, he perhaps would not have found evidence of any such immemorial usage allowed for ages. He certainly would not have found it *allowed* by any national act or legal authority; and, without one or the other, how can it be said to have been allowed? Allowed by whom? By those who committed the trespass, and no others. His lordship, moreover, might have found, that no custom, usage, power, or practice could be alleged, pleaded, or given in evidence in any court of justice against Magna Charta.

6. All the judges allow that exemptions, badges, and protections against impressment, have been given by Peers, Commons, Lord Mayors, Lords and officers of the Admiralty, and, as I understand Lord Mansfield, by officers of the navy. Now, what a loose, undefined, arbitrary power is this, to be legally established as an immemorial usage allowed for ages!

7. I wonder not that his lordship dreaded the discussion of it, and an investigation of it to the bottom, for he must have foreseen the endless difficulties of ascertaining, defining, and limiting the usages which were immemorial, and distinguishing them from such as were modern, temporary, usurped, and not allowed.

8. The counsel for the city had before observed, that the legality of pressing, if founded at all, could only be supported by immemorial usage, there being clearly no statute in force investing the crown with any such authority.

9. The infinite difficulty of determining who were seamen and who were not, must be obvious, and all agree that the power is confined to seamen and them only.

Christian, in his edition of Blackstone, vol. i. p. 419, says, in a note, "The legality of pressing is so fully established, that it will not now admit of a doubt in any court of justice;" and in proof of this he quotes Lord Mansfield's opinion in the case of the King against Tubbs, in the words I have transcribed. Whereas I think that, taking all Lord Mansfield says together, he makes the subject as doubtful as ever, and encumbered with innumerable and insuperable difficulties.

Upon the whole, all I conclude from the conduct of the modern judges and lawyers in England is, that their pride in the navy has got the better of their sense of law and justice, and that court and county lawyers, as well as administration and opposition, have been gradually endeavoring to unite for the last thirty or forty years, in sacrificing the principles of justice and law to reasons of state, by countenancing this branch of arbitrary power. But let them keep their arbitrary powers at home, not practise them upon us, our ships, or seamen.

JOHN ADAMS.

Quincy, 25 April, 1809.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THE large share of this work occupied by the official papers, necessarily contracts the limits that are assigned to the private letters. From the voluminous collection of these, written in the course of more than half a century, a rigid selection is now made. Probably not a single leading actor of the revolutionary period has left nearly so many as Mr. Adams. Even if the publication of all were deemed advisable, it could hardly be done within reasonable compass. In the present publication, the bounds of which were clearly defined at the outset, the aim has been to comprise within the space that remains all that seem for any reason to present the strongest claims to admission. Of course, much has been rejected. Especially is it matter of regret that room could not be found for the familiar letters as well of Mr. Adams as of his wife, a small portion of which were collected and published by the Editor in another shape some years ago. A number of letters addressed to Mr. Adams by distinguished men, which had been prepared, are likewise excluded, for the same reason. These materials, however, are not lost. They await a later period, when they may be presented in a shape not less durable than the present, to illustrate the heroic age of the United American States.

TO CATHARINE MACAULAY.[1]

9 August, 1770.

MADAM, — I received from Mr. Gill an intimation that a letter from me would not be disagreeable to you; and I have been emboldened, by that means, to run the venture of giving you this trouble. I have read, with much admiration, Mrs. Macaulay's History of England, &c. It is formed upon the plan which I have ever wished to see adopted by historians. It

[1] The author of the History of England.

is calculated to strip off the gilding and false lustre from worthless princes and nobles, and to bestow the reward of virtue, praise, upon the generous and worthy only. No charms of eloquence can atone for the want of this exact historical morality; and I must be allowed to say, I have never seen a history in which it is more religiously regarded. It was from this history, as well as from the concurrent testimony of all who have come to this country from England, that I had formed the highest opinion of the author as one of the brightest ornaments, not only of her sex, but of her age and country. I could not, therefore, but esteem the information given me by Mr. Gill, as one of the most agreeable and fortunate occurrences of my life.

Indeed, it was rather a mortification to me to find that a few fugitive speculations in a newspaper had excited your curiosity to inquire after me. The production, which some person in England, I know not who, has been pleased to entitle "A Dissertation on the Canon and the Feudal Law," was written at Braintree, about eleven miles from Boston, in the year 1765;— written at random, weekly, without any preconceived plan, printed in the newspapers without correction, and so little noticed or regarded here, that the author never thought it worth his while to give it either a title or a signature. And, indeed, the editor in London might with more propriety have called it "The — what d'ye call it," or, as the Critical Reviewers did, "a flimsy, lively rhapsody," than by the title he has given it. But it seems it happened to hit the taste of some one, who has given it a longer duration than a few weeks, by printing it in conjunction with the letters of the House of Representatives of this province, and by ascribing it to a very venerable, learned name. I am very sorry that Mr. Gridley's name was affixed to it for many reasons. The mistakes, inaccuracies, and want of arrangement in it are utterly unworthy of Mr. Gridley's great and deserved character for learning, and the general spirit and sentiments of it are by no means reconcilable to his known opinions and principles in politics. It was, indeed, written by your present correspondent, who then had formed designs which he never has and never will attempt to execute. Oppressed and borne down, as he is, by the infirmities of ill health, and the calls of a numerous, growing family, whose only hopes are in his continual application to the drudgeries of his profession,

it is almost impossible for him to pursue any inquiries or to enjoy any pleasures of the literary kind.[1]

However, he has been informed that you have in contemplation a history of the present reign, or some other history in which the affairs of America are to have a share. If this is true, it would give him infinite pleasure; and, whether it is so or not, if he can by any means in his power, by letters or other ways, contribute any thing to your assistance in any of your inquiries, or to your amusement, he will always esteem himself very happy in attempting it.

Pray excuse the trouble of this letter, and believe me, with great esteem and admiration, &c.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Boston, 17 December, 1773.

The die is cast. The people have passed the river and cut away the bridge. Last night three cargoes of tea were emptied into the harbor. This is the grandest event which has ever yet happened since the controversy with Britain opened. The sublimity of it charms me![2]

For my part, I cannot express my own sentiments of it better than in the words of Colonel D. to me, last evening. Balch should repeat them. "The worst that can happen, I think," said he, "in consequence of it, will be that the province must pay for it. Now, I think the province may pay for it, if it is drowned, as easily as if it is drunk; and I think it is a matter of indifference whether it is drunk or drowned. The province must pay for it in either case. But there is this difference; I believe it will take them ten years to get the province to pay for it; if so, we shall save ten years' interest of the money, whereas, if it is drunk, it must be paid for immediately." Thus he.—However, he agreed with me, that the province would never pay for it; and also in this, that the final ruin of our con-

[1] Mrs. Macaulay, in her reply, notices this in the following manner:—
"You must give me leave to say, that on the principle of having a right to treat your own performances with freedom, you have not done common justice to the work entitled, 'A Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Laws.'"

[2] The same train of reflection is in the Diary of this date. Volume ii. p. 323.

stitution of government, and of all American liberties, would be the certain consequence of suffering it to be landed.

Governor Hutchinson and his family and friends will never have done with their good services to Great Britain and the colonies. But for him, this tea might have been saved to the East India Company. Whereas this loss, if the rest of the colonies should follow our example, will, in the opinion of many persons, bankrupt the company. However, I dare say, the governor and consignees and custom-house officers in the other colonies will have more wisdom than ours have had, and take effectual care that their tea shall be sent back to England untouched; if not, it will as surely be destroyed there as it has been here.

Threats, phantoms, bugbears, by the million, will be invented and propagated among the people upon this occasion. Individuals will be threatened with suits and prosecutions. Armies and navies will be talked of. Military executions, charters annulled, treason trials in England, and all that. But these terms are all but imaginations. Yet, if they should become realities, they had better be suffered than the great principle of parliamentary taxation be given up.

The town of Boston never was more still and calm of a Saturday night than it was last night. All things were conducted with great order, decency, and *perfect submission to government.* No doubt we all thought the administration in better hands than it had been.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Boston, 22 December, 1773.

Yesterday the Governor called a council at Cambridge. Eight members met at Brattle's. This, no doubt, was concerted last Saturday, at Neponset hill, where Brattle and Russel dined, by way of caucus, I suppose.[1] Sewall dined with their honors yesterday. But behold, what a falling off was there! The Governor, who last Friday was fully persuaded and told the

[1] The Governor says that this was an attempt to convene the council, but it failed.

council that some late proceedings were high treason, and promised them the attendance of the attorney-general to prove it them out of law books,[1] now, such is his alacrity in sinking, was rather of opinion they were burglary. I suppose he meant what we call New England burglary, that is, breaking open a shop or ship, &c., which is punished with branding, &c.

But the council thought it would look rather awkward to issue a proclamation against the whole community, and therefore contented themselves with ordering Mr. Attorney to prosecute such as he should know or be informed of. They have advised a prorogation of the General Court for a fortnight. It is whispered that the Sachem has it in contemplation to go home soon, and perhaps the prorogation is to give him time to get away. Few think he will meet the House again.

The spirit of liberty is very high in the country, and universal. Worcester is aroused. Last week a monument to liberty was erected there in the heart of the town, within a few yards of Colonel Chandler's door. A gentleman of as good sense and character as any in that county, told me this day, that nothing which has been ever done, is more universally approved, applauded, and admired than these last efforts. He says, that whole towns in that county were on tiptoe to come down.

Make my compliments to Mrs. Warren, and tell her that I want a poetical genius to describe a late frolic among the sea-nymphs and goddesses. There being a scarcity of nectar and ambrosia among the celestials of the sea, Neptune has determined to substitute Hyson and Congo, and, for some of the inferior divinities, Bohea. Amphitrite, one of his wives, viz. the land, and Salaria, another of his wives, the sea, went to pulling caps upon the occasion, but Salaria prevailed. The Sirens should be introduced somehow, I cannot tell how, and Proteus, a son of Neptune, who could sometimes flow like water, and sometimes burn like fire, bark like a dog, howl like a wolf, whine like an ape, cry like a crocodile, or roar like a lion. But, for want of this same poetical genius, I can do nothing. I wish to see a late glorious event celebrated by a certain poetical pen which has no equal that I know of in this country.

[1] See the Diary, vol. ii. p. 325, and compare Hutchinson's account of this conference in the third volume of his *History*, p. 439.

We are anxious for the safety of the cargo[1] at Provincetown. Are there no Vineyard, Marshpee, Mattapoiset Indians, do you think, who will take the care of it, and protect it from violence? I mean from the hands of tyrants and oppressors, who want to do violence with it to the laws and constitution, to the present age, and to posterity.

I hope you have had a happy anniversary festival. May a double portion of the genius and spirit of our forefathers rest upon us and our posterity!

TO JAMES WARREN.

Boston, 9 April, 1774.

Dear Sir, — It is a great mortification to me to be obliged to deny myself the pleasure of a visit to my friends at Plymouth next week; but so fate has ordained it. I am a little apprehensive, too, for the State, upon this occasion, for it has heretofore received no small advantage from our sage deliberations at your fireside.

I hope Mrs. Warren is in fine health and spirits; and that I have not incurred her displeasure by making so free with the skirmish of the sea-deities, one of the most incontestable evidences of real genius which has yet been exhibited. For to take the clumsy, indigested conception of another, and work it into so elegant and classical a composition, requires genius equal to that which wrought another most beautiful poem out of the little incident of a gentleman's clipping a lock of a lady's hair with a pair of scissors. May a double portion of her genius, as well as virtues, descend to her posterity, which, united to the patriotism, &c., &c., &c., of &c., &c., &c., will make
But I am almost in the strains of Hazelrod.[2]

The tories were never, since I was born, in such a state of humiliation as at this moment. Wherever I go, in the several counties, I perceive it more and more. They are now in

[1] The fourth and last vessel was driven ashore on Cape Cod. Some of the tea was saved, sent to Boston, and landed at the castle.

[2] The name of a character in the dramatic piece, written by Mrs. Warren, entitled *The Group*, and designed to ridicule the leading loyalists of the colony.

absolute despair of obtaining a triumph without shedding an abundance of blood; and they are afraid of the consequences of this. Not that their humanity starts at it at all. The complaisance, the air of modesty and kindness to the Whigs, the show of moderation, the pains to be thought friends to liberty, and all that, is amazing. I admire the Jesuits! The science is so exquisite, and there are such immense advantages in it, that it is (if it were not for the deviltry of it) most ardently to be wished. To see them bowing, smiling, cringing, and seeming cordially friendly, to persons whom they openly avowed their malice against two years ago, and whom they would gladly butcher now, is provoking, yet diverting.

News we have none. Still! silent as midnight! The first vessels may bring us tidings which will erect the crests of the tories again, and depress the spirits of the whigs. For my own part, I am of the same opinion that I have been for many years, that there is not spirit enough on either side to bring the question to a complete decision, and that we shall oscillate like a pendulum, and fluctuate like the ocean, for many years to come, and never obtain a complete redress of American grievances, nor submit to an absolute establishment of parliamentary authority, but be trimming between both, as we have been for ten years past, for more years to come than you and I shall live. Our children may see revolutions, and be concerned and active in effecting them, of which we can form no conception.

TO WILLIAM WOODFALL.

Boston, 14 May, 1774.

I had the pleasure of receiving your favor of the 12th of March yesterday, for which I thank you. Your plan of a newspaper to profess itself a general channel of American intelligence, is happily calculated, I think, to serve the interest both of the British and the American public.[1]

If it should be in my power at any time to communicate to

[1] Mr. Woodfall had sent out a copy of his proposals to publish a newspaper, designed to be a general channel of American intelligence, and to be called the *London Packet.*

you any material intelligence, I shall be glad of the opportunity; but I have very little connection with public affairs, and I hope to have less.

Indeed, the treatment we receive from our mother country, as we have always fondly called her, begins to discourage persons here from making any applications to her, upon any occasion or for any purpose. Intelligence, evidence, petitions, are sent continually, and have been sent for ten years, to no purpose. We begin almost to wish that Europe could forget that America was ever discovered, and America could forget that Europe ever existed.

The unexampled blockade of Boston is received here with a spirit of martyrdom. It will produce effects such as were not foreseen by the minister of State who projected it, or by the abandoned men in America, who suggested the project to him.

Nero wished that the inhabitants of Rome had but one neck, that he might have the pleasure of cutting it off with his own hand at one blow. This, as it would have speedily terminated their misery, was humanity in comparison of the minister's project of turning famine into a populous city to devour its devoted inhabitants by slow torments and lingering degrees.

P. S. The commerce of this town of itself has been an essential link in a vast chain, which has made New England what it is, the southern provinces what they are, the West India islands what they are, and the African trade what that is, to say no more. The world will very soon see with horror, that this chain is broken by one blow.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Ipswich, 25 June, 1774.

I am very sorry I had not the pleasure of seeing you after your return from Salem, as I wanted a great deal of conversation with you on several subjects.

The principal topic, however, was the enterprise to Philadelphia. I view the assembly, that is to be there, as I do the court of Areopagus, the council of the Amphictyons, a conclave,

a sanhedrim, a divan, I know not what. I suppose you sent me there to school. I thank you for thinking me an apt scholar, or capable of learning. For my own part, I am at a loss, totally at a loss, what to do when we get there; but I hope to be there taught.

It is to be a school of political prophets, I suppose, a nursery of American Statesmen. May it thrive and prosper and flourish, and from this fountain may there issue streams, which shall gladden all the cities and towns in North America, forever! I am for making it annual, and for sending an entire new set every year, that all the principal geniuses may go to the university in rotation, that we may have politicians in plenty. Our great complaint is the scarcity of men fit to govern such mighty interests as are clashing in the present contest. A scarcity indeed! For who is sufficient for these things? Our policy must be to improve every opportunity and means for forming our people, and preparing leaders for them in the grand march of politics. We must make our children travel. You and I have too many cares and occupations, and therefore we must recommend it to Mrs. Warren, and her friend Mrs. Adams, to teach our sons the divine science of the politics; and to be frank, I suspect they understand it better than we do.

There is one ugly reflection. Brutus and Cassius were conquered and slain. Hampden died in the field, Sidney on the scaffold, Harrington in jail, &c. This is cold comfort. Politics are an ordeal path among red hot ploughshares. Who, then would be a politician for the pleasure of running about barefoot among them? Yet somebody must. And I think those whose characters, circumstances, educations, &c., call them, ought to follow.

Yet I do not think that one or a few men are under any moral obligation to sacrifice for themselves and families all the pleasures, profits, and prospects of life, while others for whose benefit this is to be done lie idle, enjoying all the sweets of society, accumulating wealth in abundance, and laying foundations for opulent and powerful families for many generations. No. I think the arduous duties of the times ought to be discharged in rotation, and I never will engage more in politics but upon this system.

I must entreat the favor of your sentiments and Mrs. Warren's

what is proper, practicable, expedient, wise, just, good, necessary to be done at Philadelphia. Pray let me have them in a letter before I go.[1]

TO JOHN TUDOR.

Braintree, 23 July, 1774.

You will be surprised, I believe, to receive a letter from me, upon a matter which I have so little right to intermeddle with as the subject of this. I am sensible it is a subject of very great delicacy; but as it is of equal importance to your own happiness and that of your only son, I hope and believe you will receive it, as it is really meant, as an expression of my friendship both to yourself and him, without any other view or motive whatever.[2]

Your son has never said a word to me, but, from what I have accidentally heard from others, I have reason to believe that he is worried and uneasy in his mind. This discontent is in danger of producing very disagreeable effects, as it must interrupt his happiness, and as it may, and probably will, if not removed, injure his health, and, by discouraging his mind and depressing his spirits, disincline him to, or disqualify him for, his studies and business.

I believe, Sir, you are not so sensible as I am of the difficulty of a young gentleman's getting into much business in the practice of the law. It must, in the best of times and for the most promising genius, be a work of time. The present situation of public affairs is such as has rendered this difficulty tenfold greater than ever. The grant from the crown of salaries to the judges, the proceedings of the two houses of assembly in relation to it, and the general discontent throughout all the counties of the

[1] Compare the Diary of the same date. Vol. ii. p. 338. A letter of similar purport seems to have been addressed to Joseph Hawley from this place two days later, but no copy remains. See p. 342.

[2] William Tudor, the young man here mentioned, had been a student in the office of the writer. An interesting biographical memoir of him, from which this letter has been taken, is to be found in the 18th volume of the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

province, among jurors and others, concerning it, had well nigh ruined the business of all the lawyers in the government, before the news of the three late acts of parliament arrived. These acts had put an end to all the business of the law in Boston. The port act of itself has done much towards this, but the other two acts have spread throughout the province such an apprehension, that there will be no business for courts for some time to come, that our business is at present in a manner at an end.

In this state of things I am sure it is impossible that your son's income should be adequate to his necessary expenses, however frugal he may be, and I have heard that he complains that it is not.

The expenses for the rent of his office, for his board and washing, must come to a considerable sum annually, without accounting a farthing for other transient charges, which a young gentleman of the most sober and virtuous character can no more avoid than he can those for his bed and board. So that it is absolutely impossible but that he must run behind hand and be obliged to run in debt for necessaries, unless either he is assisted by his father, or leaves the town of Boston and betakes himself to some distant place in the country, where, if his business should not be more, his expenses would be vastly less.

I am well aware of the follies and vices so fashionable among many of the young gentlemen of our age and country, and, if your son was infected with them, I would never have become an advocate for him, without his knowledge, as I now am, with his father. I should think, the more he was restrained the better. But I know him to have a clear head and an honest, faithful heart. He is virtuous, sober, steady, industrious, and constant to his office. He is as frugal as he can be in his rank and class of life, without being mean.

It is your peculiar felicity to have a son whose behavior and character are thus deserving.

Now there can be nothing in this life so exquisitely painful to such a mind, so humiliating, so mortifying, as to be distrusted by his father, as to be obliged to borrow of strangers, or to run in debt and lie at mercy.

A small donation of real or personal estate, made to him now, would probably be of more service to him than ten times that sum ten years hence. It would give him a small income

that he could depend upon; it would give him weight and reputation in the world; it would assist him greatly in getting into business.

I am under concern lest the anxiety he now struggles with should prove fatal to him. I have written this without his knowledge, and I do not propose ever to acquaint him with it. If you please you may burn this; only I must entreat you to believe it to flow only from real concern for a young gentleman whom I greatly esteem.

JOSEPH HAWLEY[1] TO JOHN ADAMS.

Northampton, 25 July, 1774.

I never received nor heard of your letter of the 27th of June last, written at Ipswich, until the 23d instant. Immediately on the receipt of it, I set myself to consider of an answer to it.

What I first remark is, your great distrust of your abilities for the service assigned you. Hereon I say that I imagine I have some knowledge of your abilities, and I assure you, Sir, I gave my vote for you most heartily, and I have not yet repented of it. My opinion is, that our committee, taken together, is the best we could have taken in the province. I should be extremely sorry that any one of them should fail of going. The absence of any one of them will destroy that happy balance or equilibrium which they will form together. I acknowledge that the service is most important, and I do not know who is fully equal to it. The importance of the business ought not to beget despondency in any one, but to excite to the greatest circumspection, the most attentive and mature consideration, and calmest deliberation. Courage and fortitude must be maintained. If we give way to despondency, it will soon be all over with us. Rashness must be avoided. The end or effect of every measure proposed, must be thoroughly contemplated before it be adopted. It must be well looked to that the measure be feasible and practicable. If we make attempts, and fail in them, Lord

[1] Of this remarkable man, it is to be regretted that so few traces remain. Even under the pen of an enemy like Hutchinson, his character shines like burnished gold.

North will call them impudent and futile, and the tories will triumph.

It appears to me, Sir, that the Congress ought first to settle with absolute precision, the object or objects to be pursued; as whether the end of all shall be the repeal of the tea duty only, or of that and the molasses act, or these and opening the port of Boston, or these and also the restoration of the charter of the Massachusetts Bay (for it is easy to demonstrate that the late act for regulation, &c., in its effect, annuls the whole charter, so far as the charter granted any privileges). When the objects or ends to be pursued are clearly and certainly settled, the means or measures to be used to obtain and effect those ends can be better judged of. Most certainly the objects must be definitely agreed on, and settled by Congress, first or last.

As to means and measures, I am not fully settled or determined in my own mind. It may not be prudent fully to explain myself in writing upon that head. The letter may miscarry.

You are pleased to say that extremities and ruptures it is our policy to avoid. I agree it, if any other means will answer our ends, or if it is plain that *they* would not. But let me say, Sir, that with me it is settled as a maxim and first truth, that the people or State who will not or cannot defend their liberties and rights, will not have any for any long time. They will be slaves. Some other State will find it out, and will subjugate them.

You say, Sir, that measures to check and interrupt the torrent of luxury, are most agreeable to your sentiments. Pray, Sir, did any thing ever do it, but necessity?

The institution of annual Congresses, you suppose, will brighten the chain, and would make excellent statesmen and politicians. I agree it. But pray, Sir, do not you imagine that such an institution would breed extremities and ruptures? It appears to me most clear that the institution, if formed, must be discontinued, or we must defend it with *ruptures*.

I suggested above that my letter might miscarry; and we do not know, when we write, to what hands our letters may come. I should therefore be extremely glad to see some, or all of the committee, as they pass through this county. If there were any hopes of obtaining the favor, I would beg them all to come through Northampton. It would not be more than twenty

miles farther, and as good a road. But I imagine they will all pass through Springfield. And the favor I earnestly ask of you, Sir, is, that you would be pleased to inform by a letter by our post, what day you expect to be at Springfield, and I will endeavor to see the committee then, although I should wait there two or three days for it. Pray, Sir, do not fail of sending me this intelligence. You will probably receive this letter on Saturday this week, by Mr. Wilde, our post. He keeps Sabbath at Boston. He commonly comes out on Monday, about eleven o'clock. You may find him, or if you leave a letter for him, to take either at Messrs. Edes & Gill's office, or at Messrs. Fleets, in the forenoon, it will probably come safe to me next week on Wednesday. I will prevail with him, if I can, to call on you to take a line from you for me. Information of the time you intend to be at Springfield, I am very anxious to obtain. Pray, Sir, oblige me with it.

But as it is possible that I may miss of seeing the committee, or any of them, which will indeed be to me a very great disappointment, I ask leave to make myself free enough to suggest the following, which, if you judge proper, I consent you should communicate to your brethren. You cannot, Sir, but be fully apprised, that a good issue of the Congress depends a good deal on the harmony, good understanding, and I had almost said brotherly love, of its members; and every thing tending to beget and improve such mutual affection, and indeed to cement the body, ought to be practised; and every thing in the least tending to create disgust or strangeness, coldness, or so much as indifference, carefully avoided. Now there is an opinion which does in some degree obtain in the other colonies, that the Massachusetts gentlemen, and especially of the town of Boston, do affect to dictate and take the lead in continental measures; that we are apt, from an inward vanity and self-conceit, to assume big and haughty airs. Whether this opinion has any foundation in fact, I am not certain. Our own tories propagate it, if they did not at first suggest it. Now I pray that every thing in the conduct and behaviour of our gentlemen, which might tend to beget or strengthen such an opinion, might be most carefully avoided. It is highly probable, in my opinion, that you will meet gentlemen from several of the other colonies, fully equal to yourselves or any of you, in their know-

ledge of Great Britain, the colonies, law, history, government, commerce, &c. I know some of the gentlemen of Connecticut are very sensible, ingenious, solid men. Who will go from New York, I have not heard, but I know there are very able men there; and by what we from time to time see in the public papers, and what our assembly and committees have received from the assemblies and committees of the more southern colonies, we must be satisfied that they have men of as much sense and literature as any we can or ever could boast of. But enough of this sort, and I ask pardon that I have said so much of it.

Another thing I beg leave just to hint; — that it is very likely that you may meet divers gentlemen in Congress, who are of Dutch, or Scotch, or Irish extract. Many more there are in those southern colonies of those descents, than in these New England colonies, and many of them very worthy, learned men. *Quære*, therefore, whether prudence would not direct that every thing should be very cautiously avoided which could give any the least umbrage, disgust, or affront to any of such pedigree. For as of every nation and blood, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him, so they ought to be of us. Small things may have important effects in such a business. That which disparages our family ancestors or nation, is apt to stick by us, if cast up in comparison, and their blood you will find as warm as ours.

One thing I want that the southern gentlemen should be deeply impressed with; that is, that all acts of British legislation which influence and affect our internal polity, are as absolutely repugnant to liberty and the idea of our being a free people, as taxation or revenue acts. Witness the present regulation act for this province; and, if we shall not be subdued by what is done already, like acts will undoubtedly be made for other colonies. I expect nothing but new treasons, new felonies, new misprisions, new præmunires, and, not to say the Lord, the devil knows what.

Pray, Sir, let Mr. Samuel Adams know that our top Tories here give out most confidently, that he will certainly be taken up before the Congress. I am not timid with regard to myself or friends, but I am satisfied that they have such advice from head-quarters. Please to give my hearty regards to him, the

Speaker, and all the gentlemen of the Congress; and I beg that neither of them would on any account make default. If they do, there will be great searchings of heart. You may all manage the journey so that it will be pleasant, and very much serve your health. And that God would bless you all, is the most fervent prayer of, Sir,

Your hearty friend, &c.

JOSEPH HAWLEY.

Pray, Sir, do not fail of acquainting me when you shall be in our county.[1]

TO WILLIAM TUDOR.

Philadelphia, 29 September, 1774.

I wish it was in my power to write you any thing for the relief of your anxiety, under the pressure of those calamities which now distress our beloved town of Boston and province of Massachusetts. The sentiments expressed in your last to me, are such as would do honor to the best of citizens, in the minds of the virtuous and worthy, of any age or country, in the worst of times. *Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*

> Would'st thou receive thy country's loud applause,
> Lov'd as her father, as her God ador'd?
> Be thou the bold assertor of her cause,
> Her voice in council; in the fight, her sword.

You have no adequate idea of the pleasures or the difficulties of the errand I am now upon. The Congress is such an assembly as never before came together, on a sudden, in any part of the world. Here are fortunes, abilities, learning, eloquence, acuteness, equal to any I ever met with in my life. Here is a diversity of religions, educations, manners, interests, such as it would seem almost impossible to unite in one plan of conduct. Every question is discussed with a moderation, an acuteness, and a minuteness equal to that of Queen Elizabeth's privy

[1] The delegates did not pass through Springfield. Mr. Hawley, being disappointed in meeting with them, and being desirous to communicate his views of the measures to be pursued at this crisis, sent them the remarkable paper entitled "Broken hints, to be communicated to the committee of Congress for the Massachusetts," which is inserted in the appendix (A) to this volume.

council. This occasions infinite delays. We are under obligations of secrecy in every thing, except the single vote you have seen, approving the resolutions of the county of Suffolk. What effect this vote may have with you, is uncertain. What you will do, God knows. You say you look up to the Congress. It is well you should; but I hope you will not expect too much from us. The delegates here are not sufficiently acquainted with our province, and with the circumstances you are in, to form a judgment what course it is proper for you to take. They start at the thought of taking up the old charter; they shudder at the prospect of blood; yet they are unanimously and unalterably against your submission to any of the Acts for a single moment.

You see by this what they are for; namely, that you stand stock still, and live without government or law, at least for the present, and as long as you can. I have represented to them, whenever I see them, the utter impossibility of four hundred thousand people existing long without a legislature, or courts of justice. They all seem to acknowledge it, yet nothing can as yet be accomplished.

We hear perpetually the most figurative panegyrics upon our wisdom, fortitude, and temperance; the most fervent exhortations to perseverance; but nothing more is done.

I may venture to tell you that I believe we shall agree to non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation, but not to commence so soon as I could wish.

Indeed all this would be insufficient for your purpose; a more adequate support and relief to the Massachusetts should be adopted. But I tremble for fear we should fail of obtaining it.

There is, however, a most laudable zeal, and an excellent spirit, which every day increases, especially in this city. The Quakers had a general meeting last Sunday, and are deeply affected with the complexion of the times. They have recommended to all their people to renounce tea; and indeed the people of this city, of all denominations, have laid it generally aside, since our arrival here. They are about setting up companies of cadets, volunteers, &c., &c.

It is the universal opinion here, that General Gage is in the horrors, and that he means to act only on the defensive. How well this opinion is founded, you can judge better than I.

I must beseech you to show this letter to no man in whom you have not the most perfect confidence. It may do a great deal of mischief.

We have had numberless prejudices to remove here. We have been obliged to act with great delicacy and caution. We have been obliged to keep ourselves out of sight, and to feel pulses, and to sound the depths; to insinuate our sentiments, designs, and desires, by means of other persons, sometimes of one province, and sometimes of another. A future opportunity in conversation will, I hope, make you acquainted with all.

TO EDWARD BIDDLE.[1]

Braintree, 12 December, 1774.

I received your kind favor of 16th ultimo, with great pleasure, last week, at Cambridge. I rejoice at the proofs your city has given of her inflexible attachment to the public cause, and determination to support it. There are many names in your list of committee men, which I had not the pleasure of knowing; but there are abilities, virtues, and spirit enough, in those whom I know very well, to secure the good behaviour of any committee which could, I think, be chosen in your and my beloved city.

The letter to Quebec shall be faithfully and speedily forwarded. Our provincial Congress, and the committee of correspondence in Boston, have had under consideration various

[1] The address of this letter does not appear upon the imperfect draught that has been preserved. It is now given by conjecture from the context. That the person must have been one of the seven delegates of Pennsylvania to the first Congress, is obvious. Of these it could not have been Galloway, or Ross, or Dickinson, for they are mentioned in the third person. The reason for selecting Mr. Biddle from the four remaining is, that he was on the committee which reported the bill of rights alluded to in the last paragraph, and therefore familiar with the writer's relation to the fourth article; and that the business not completed by the Congress, seems to have been left in his care. He was chairman, with Messrs. Dickinson and Thomson, herein alluded to together, to superintend the publication of the journal; and probably likewise had charge of the distribution of the letter to Quebec. It must have been in this capacity that he addressed the letter to Mr. Adams, to which this is the reply; as the Congress had recommended that the delegates of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York, should assist in the dispersion of that document. By a memorandum inserted in the American Archives, it appears that three hundred copies had been forwarded to Boston on the 16th of November.

plans for opening a communication with several parts of that province.

You kindly inquire what we are doing or suffering. You will see by a printed pamphlet, which I will send you as soon as it is out, what our provincial congress has been doing — that is, you will see in part, not all. Our people, through the province, are everywhere learning the military art — exercising perpetually; so that, I suppose, if occasion should require, an army of fifteen thousand men, from this province alone, might be brought into the field in one week.

The difficulties we suffer, however, for want of law and government, are innumerable; a total stagnation of law and commerce almost. No man can pay his just debts, because he can get no business to do, by which he can earn any money, and if he has ever so much due to him, he cannot get a shilling of it from his debtors. We are trying, by a thousand experiments, the ingenuity as well as virtue of our people. The effects are such as would divert you. Imagine four hundred thousand people without government or law, forming themselves in companies for various purposes, of justice, policy, and war! You must allow for a great deal of the ridiculous, much of the melancholy, and some of the marvellous. I must not be particular, because my letter may miscarry.

I have sometimes wished, since my return, that we had fallen in, *totis viribus*, with the motion made by Mr. Ross, and seconded by Mr. Galloway, that this province should be left to her own discretion with respect to government and justice, as well as defence. Our provincial Congress had in contemplation some sublime conceptions, which would in that case have been carried rapidly into execution.

Your account of the General's intended journey to Maryland, gave me great pleasure.[1] I hope the continent will provide themselves, at this time, with arms and skill. No country ought ever to be without either.

The intuitive, the holy, the decisive spirits mentioned in a late Philadelphia paper, cannot avoid recollecting at this time, my friend, that the Grecian commonwealths were the most heroic confederacy that ever existed; the politest, bravest, and

[1] This must have been General Charles Lee.

wisest of men. Their sculptors, painters, architects, poets, physicians, critics, historians, philosophers, orators, warriors, and statesmen, were the brightest ornaments of their whole species, and examples for imitation to all succeeding generations. The period of their glory was from the defeat of Xerxes to the rise of Alexander. Let us not be enslaved, my dear friend, either by Xerxes or Alexander.

The town of Boston is like Zion in distress. Seneca's virtuous man struggling with adversity.

Spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat Deus.

Suffering amazing loss, but determined to endure poverty and death, rather than betray America and posterity.

Be pleased to present my most respectful compliments and grateful acknowledgments to Mr. Dickinson, Thomson, &c. I have not time to name them all. I mean almost the whole city of Philadelphia.

I should have written to you long before this, if I had not been prevented by an inflammation in my eyes, so violent that I have not been able to write or read. Pray write me as often as possible, and let me know how the fourth resolution in our bill of rights is relished and digested among the choice spirits along the continent. I had more anxiety about that, than all the rest. But I find it is extremely popular here. Our provincial Congress have approved and adopted it in strong terms. They consider it as a great point gained. They think it has placed our connection with Great Britain on its true principles, and that there is no danger from it to us, and there is quite as much allowed to her as either justice or policy requires.

TO JAMES BURGH.

Braintree, 28 December, 1774.

Sir, — I have had the honor of receiving from you a present, in two volumes of Political Disquisitions. The very polite and obliging manner in which this present was conveyed to me, demands my grateful acknowledgments. But the present itself is invaluable.

I cannot but think those Disquisitions the best service that a citizen could render to his country at this great and dangerous crisis, when the British empire seems ripe for destruction, and tottering on the brink of a precipice. If any thing can possibly open the eyes of the nation, and excite it to exert itself, it must be such a sight of its danger, and of the imperceptible steps by which it ascended to it.

I have contributed somewhat to make the Disquisitions more known and attended to in several parts of America, and they are held in as high estimation by all my friends as they are by me. The more they are read, the more eagerly and generally they are sought for.

We have pleased ourselves in America with hopes that the publication of those Disquisitions, the exertions of the other friends of virtue and freedom in England, together with the union of sentiment and conduct of America, which appears by the proceedings of the Congress of Philadelphia, would have had their full operation and effect upon the nation, during the fall and winter, while the people were canvassing for elections; and that, in spite of bribery, some alteration in the House of Commons for the better might have been made. But the sudden dissolution of parliament, and the impatient summons for a new election, have blasted all these hopes. We now see plainly, that every trick and artifice of sharpers, gamblers, and horse-jockies, is to be played off against the cause of liberty in England and America; and that no hopes are to be left for either but in the sword.

We are, in this province, Sir, at the brink of a civil war. Our Alva, Gage, with his fifteen Mandamus counsellors, are shut up in Boston, afraid to stir, afraid of their own shades, protected with a dozen regiments of regular soldiers and strong fortifications in the town, but never moving out of it. We have no council, no house, no legislative, no executive. Not a court of justice has sat since the month of September. Not a debt can be recovered, nor a trespass redressed, nor a criminal of any kind brought to punishment. What the ministry will do next, is uncertain. Enforce the act for altering our government they cannot; all the regiments upon the establishment would not do it, for juries will not serve nor represent. Whatever Alva and his troops may think of it, it has required great

caution and delicacy in the conduct of affairs to prevent their destruction. For my own part, I have bent my chief attention to prevent a rupture, and to impress my friends with the importance of preventing it. Not that I think the lives of five or ten thousand men, though my own should be one of them, would not be very profitably spent in obtaining a restoration of our liberties, but because I know that those lives would never go unrevenged, and it would be vain ever to hope for a reconciliation with Great Britain afterwards. Britons would not easily forgive the destruction of their brethren; I am absolutely certain that New England men never would that of theirs. Nor would any part of America ever forget or forgive the destruction of one New England man in this cause. The death of four or five persons, the most obscure and inconsiderable that could have been found upon the continent, on the 5th March, 1770, has never yet been forgiven by any part of America. What, then, would be the consequence of a battle in which many thousands must fall, of the best blood, the best families, fortunes, abilities, and moral characters in the country?

America never will submit to the claims of parliament and administration. New England alone has two hundred thousand fighting men, and all in a militia, established by law; not exact soldiers, but all used to arms.[1]

TO JAMES WARREN.

Braintree, 3 January, 1775.

Dear Sir, — I have this morning received a line from Mrs. Warren, and will inclose her letter to Mrs. Macaulay by the first opportunity. Be pleased to make my compliments to Mrs. Warren.

Yesterday I had a letter from Annapolis, in Maryland, from my friend Mr. Chase, inclosing the resolutions of their provincial convention, consisting of eighty members, representing all

[1] Incomplete — the rest on a leaf, which has been torn off.

their counties. I wish I could inclose it to you, but it must be printed here. They unanimously approve the proceedings of the Continental Congress, and determine to carry them punctually into execution; choose the same delegates, with two new ones, for the next Congress; vote to kill no lambs; to raise flour, cotton, and hemp; and unanimously vote a militia to be established through the whole province by the people themselves, who are to choose their own officers, and all persons between sixteen and fifty are to be embodied; unanimously vote to raise ten thousand pounds, to be laid out by the county committees in arms and ammunition to be kept and disposed of by the committees as they shall think proper; unanimously vote that contributions for Boston be continued as long as wanted; and resolve unanimously, "That if the late acts of parliament relative to the Massachusetts Bay shall be attempted to be carried into execution by force in that colony, or if the assumed power of parliament to tax the colonies shall be attempted to be carried into execution by force in that or any other colony, that, in such case, this province will support such colony to the utmost of their power;" recommend similar resolutions to all the other colonies, and vote similar letters to be sent them.

You will soon see the whole, I hope. There is a charming spirit in the whole, as well as in Chase's letter. He says, "he thinks we may never have a more favorable crisis to determine the point; I mean the colonies will probably never be so cordially united, and their spirits in a higher tone, than at present." He says, that "recent advices leave us little room to hope; and we must therefore trust to the goodness of our cause, our own virtue and fortitude." He says, "he has no doubt that sentiments equally generous and wise prevail in our colony, who have hitherto exhibited an example of wisdom, patience, and fortitude, to the disgrace of the present, and the admiration of the future generations."

We have no great news. The old rotten rascals are again chiefly chosen.[1] I have seen the list; very few new members.

If you see Draper's papers and Mills and Hicks's, you will observe that the arch-enemy is at work again[2] in his infernal council at Boston.

[1] To Parliament.

[2] The papers of *Massachusettensis* were in course of publication.

I never think of the junto there, immured as they are, without recollecting the infernal spirits in Milton after they had recovered from their first astonishment arising from their fall from the battlements of heaven to the sulphurous lake, not subdued, though confounded, and plotting a fresh assault on the skies.

> "What though the field be lost?
> All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield," &c.
>
> "Of this be sure,
> To do aught good never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delight," &c.

Is not this rather too frolicsome and triumphant for the times, which are dull enough, and as bad as they can be? I doubt whether war, carnage, and havoc would make us more unhappy than this cruel state of suspense we suffer in the contemplation of them in prospect. In haste.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Braintree, 15 March, 1775.

Dear Sir, — I have had the pleasure and the honor of several letters from you, and one from an incomparable satirist of our acquaintance, and must own myself very faulty in neglecting so long to answer them; but you know the infirmity of my eyes, which still continues, and renders it very difficult for me to discharge my debts in the literary way. The speculations you read every week, as you say, in the papers, drop down from the clouds.[1] Is it not impossible that they should be written without eyes?

As to my being of the Congress, I think our town did right in not choosing me, as they left out Thayer, and as Mr. Palmer is as good a hand as they can employ; and having been for some time in the centre of all their business in the county, town, and province, he is the best man they have. Indeed, I

[1] The papers of *Novanglus*.

was not at the meeting, and never had been at any meeting in this town for eight years. To say the truth, I was much averse to being chosen, and shall continue so, for I am determined, if things are settled, to avoid public life. I have neither fortune, leisure, health, nor genius for it. Being a man of desperate fortune, and a bankrupt in business, I cannot help putting my hand to the pump, now the ship is in a storm, and the hold half full of water; but as soon as she gets into a calm, and a place of safety, I must leave her. At such a time as this, there are many dangerous things to be done, which nobody else will do, and therefore I cannot help attempting them; but in peaceful times there are always hands enough ready.

The accounts we have from every quarter are agreeable upon the whole. If we are prudent, a war will break out in England first, whatever the sanguine tories may hope, or the timid whigs dread.

Virginia has sown her wheat instead of tobacco; and so many of her planters have desisted from exporting the old crop, that the vessels cannot get freight. Their men are ready to march.

I think the petitions from Jamaica, and the behavior of the other islands, are great events in our favor; and on the whole, that the measures already concerted will as certainly insure us success as sun and rain, a deep soil and strong manure, will produce you a crop of grass. It may take time.

The people this way rather advance in resolution, I think. I have this day attended a town meeting, and we have voted three companies of minute men, and an association comprehending that of the Congress and all the votes of the Provincial Congress, and appointed a committee of thirty persons to see it faithfully observed. We have a few rascally Jacobites and Roman Catholics in this town, but they dare not show themselves.

The lies the tories make and spread to keep up the spirits of their party, are ridiculous enough. Forty thousand Russians, twenty thousand British and Irish troops, and sixteen capital ships and a thousand cutters, and all that. Such steps would produce another revolution.

I hope to have the pleasure of an evening with you in your way to Concord. Pray take a bed here.

My most friendly regards to a certain lady. Tell her that God Almighty (I use a bold style) has intrusted her with powers for the good of the world, which in the course of his providence he bestows upon very few of the human race; that instead of being a fault to use them it would be criminal to neglect them.

TO MOSES GILL.[1]

Philadelphia, 10 June, 1775.

DEAR SIR, — It would be a relief to my mind, if I could write freely to you concerning the sentiments, principles, facts, and arguments which are laid before us in Congress; but injunctions and engagements of honor render this impossible. What I learn out of doors among citizens, gentlemen, and persons of all denominations, is not so sacred. I find that the general sense abroad is, to prepare for a vigorous defensive war, but at the same time to keep open the door of reconciliation; to hold the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other; to proceed with warlike measures and conciliatory measures *pari passu*.

I am myself as fond of reconciliation, if we could reasonably entertain hopes of it upon a constitutional basis, as any man. But I think, if we consider the education of the sovereign, and that the Lords, the Commons, the electors, the army, the navy, the officers of excise, customs, &c., &c., have been now for many years gradually trained and disciplined by corruption to the system of the court, we shall be convinced that the cancer is too deeply rooted and too far spread to be cured by any thing short of cutting it out entire.

We have ever found by experience, that petitions, negotiations, every thing which holds out to the people hopes of a reconciliation without bloodshed, is greedily grasped at and relied on; and they cannot be persuaded to think that it is so necessary to prepare for war as it really is. Hence our present scarcity of powder, &c.

[1] This letter was addressed to Mr. Gill as chairman of the committee of supplies, at Cambridge, and is preserved in the archives of Massachusetts.

However, this continent is a vast, unwieldy machine. We cannot force events. We must suffer people to take their own way in many cases, when we think it leads wrong, hoping, however, and believing that our liberty and felicity will be preserved in the end, though not in the speediest and surest manner. In my opinion, powder and artillery are the most efficacious, sure, and infallible conciliatory measures we can adopt.

Pray write me by every opportunity, and beseech my friends to write. Every letter I receive does great good. The gentleman to whom most letters from our province are addressed, has not leisure to make the best use of them.

There are three powder mills in this province, two in New York, but no nitre. Cannot the Massachusetts begin to prepare both? Pray write me minutely the state of the people of Boston and our army.

Pray let me know if Mr. Gill and Mr. Boylston are out of prison. I have never heard, and have suffered much anxiety on their account. My best respects to them, if they are to be seen by you.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 18 June, 1775.

Dear Sir, — I have at last obtained liberty, by a vote of Congress, to acquaint my friends with a few of the things that have been done.

The Congress have voted, or rather a committee of the whole house have unanimously agreed, that the sum of two million dollars be issued in bills of credit, for the redemption of which, in a certain number of years, twelve colonies have unanimously pledged themselves.

The Congress has likewise resolved that fifteen thousand men shall be supported at the expense of the continent; ten thousand at Massachusetts, and five thousand at New York; and that ten companies of riflemen be sent immediately, six from Pennsylvania, two from Maryland, and two from Virginia, consisting of sixty-eight privates in each company, to join our army at Boston. These are said to be all exquisite marksmen, and

by means of the excellence of their firelocks, as well as their skill in the use of them, to send sure destruction to great distances.

General Washington is chosen commander-in-chief, General Ward the first major-general, and General Lee the second, (the last has not yet accepted,) and Major Gates adjutant-general. Lee and Gates are experienced officers. We have proceeded no further as yet.

I have never, in all my lifetime, suffered more anxiety than in the conduct of this business. The choice of officers, and their pay, have given me great distress. Lee and Gates are officers of such great experience and confessed abilities, that I thought their advice, in a council of officers, might be of great advantage to us; but the natural prejudices, and virtuous attachment of our countrymen to their own officers, made me apprehensive of difficulties. But considering the earnest desire of General Washington to have the assistance of these officers, the extreme attachment of many of our best friends in the southern colonies to them, the reputation they would give to our arms in Europe, and especially with the ministerial generals and army in Boston, as well as the real American merit of them both, I could not withhold my vote from either.

The pay which has been voted to all the officers, which the Continental Congress intends to choose, is so large, that I fear our people will think it extravagant, and be uneasy. Mr. Adams, Mr. Paine, and myself, used our utmost endeavors to reduce it, but in vain.

Those ideas of equality, which are so agreeable to us natives of New England, are very disagreeable to many gentlemen in the other colonies. They had a great opinion of the high importance of a continental general, and were determined to place him in an elevated point of light. They think the Massachusetts establishment too high for the privates, and too low for the officers, and they would have their own way.

I hope the utmost politeness and respect will be shown to these officers on their arrival. The whole army, I think, should be drawn up upon the occasion, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war displayed; — *no powder burned, however.*

There is something charming to me in the conduct of Wash-

ington. A gentleman of one of the first fortunes upon the continent, leaving his delicious retirement, his family and friends, sacrificing his ease, and hazarding all in the cause of his country! His views are noble and disinterested. He declared, when he accepted the mighty trust, that he would lay before us an exact account of his expenses, and not accept a shilling for pay. The express waits.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.[1]

Philadelphia, June, 1775.

In compliance with your request, I have considered of what you proposed, and am obliged to give you my sentiments very briefly, and in great haste.

In general, Sir, there will be three committees, either of a Congress, or of a House of Representatives, which are and will be composed of our best men, such whose judgment and integrity may be most relied on. I mean the committee on the state of the province, the committee of safety, and the committee of supplies.

But lest this should be too general, I beg leave to mention particularly James Warren, Esquire, of Plymouth, Joseph Hawley, Esquire, of Northampton, John Winthrop, Esquire, LL. D., of Cambridge, Dr. Warren, Dr. Church, Colonel Palmer, of Braintree, Elbridge Gerry, Esquire, of Marblehead. Mr. Bowdoin, Mr. Sever, Mr. Dexter, lately of the council, will be found to be very worthy men, as well as Mr. Pitts, who, I am sorry to hear, is in ill health. The recommendations of these gentlemen may be relied on.

Our president was pleased to recommend to you Mr. William Bant for one of your aides-de-camp. I must confess I know not where to find a gentleman of more merit, and better qualified for such a place.

Mr. Paine was pleased to mention to you Mr. William Tudor, a young gentleman of the law, for a secretary to the General.

[1] This is taken from what would seem to have been the original letter, so that it is uncertain whether it was ever delivered. It may have been superseded by a personal conference. It was written probably on the 19th or 20th.

And all the rest of my brothers, you may remember, very cheerfully concurred with him. His abilities and virtues are such, as must recommend him to every man who loves modesty, ingenuity, or fidelity. But as I find an interest has been made in behalf of Mr. Trumbull, of Connecticut, I must submit the decision to your further inquiries, after you shall arrive at Cambridge. Mr. Trumbull's merit is such, that I dare not say a word against his pretensions. I only beg to say, that Mr. Tudor is an exile from a good employment and fair prospects, in the town of Boston, driven by that very tyranny against which we are all contending.

There is another gentleman of liberal education and real genius, as well as great activity, who, I find, is a major in the army. His name is Jonathan Williams Austin. I mention him, Sir, not so much for the sake of recommending him to any particular favor, as to give the General an opportunity of observing a youth of great abilities, and of reclaiming him from certain follies which have hitherto, in other departments of life, obscured him.

There is another gentleman, whom I presume to be in the army, either as a captain, or in some higher station, whose name is William Smith. As this young gentleman is my brother-in-law, I do not recommend him for any other place than that in which the voice of his country has placed him. But the countenance of the General, as far as his conduct shall deserve it, which in an army is of great importance, will be gratefully acknowledged as a particular obligation by his brother.[1]

With great sincerity I wish you an agreeable journey, and a successful, a glorious campaign; and am, with great esteem, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Philadelphia, 29 July, 1775.

I had yesterday the honor of your letter of July 11th, and I feel myself much obliged by your kind attention to me and my family, but much more by your care for the public

[1] It is a curious coincidence that, whilst Mr. Adams, at Philadelphia, was recommending his wife's brother to General Washington, Mrs. Adams, from Braintree, was asking a commission for her husband's brother, in a letter to the council yet preserved in the archives of Massachusetts.

safety, and the judicious and important observations you have made. Your letters, Sir, so far from being "a burthen," I consider as an honor to me, besides the pleasure and instruction they afford me. Believe me, Sir, nothing is of more importance to me, in my present most arduous and laborious employment, than a constant correspondence with gentlemen of experience, whose characters are known. The minutest fact, the most trivial event, that is connected with the great American cause, becomes important in the present critical situation of affairs, when a revolution seems to be in the designs of providence, as important as any that ever happened in the affairs of mankind.

We jointly lament the loss of a Quincy and a Warren, two characters as great, in proportion to their age, as any that I have ever known in America. Our country mourns the loss of both, and sincerely sympathizes with the feelings of the mother of the one, and the father of the other. They were both my intimate friends, with whom I lived and conversed with pleasure and advantage. I was animated by them in the painful, dangerous course of opposition to the oppressions brought upon our country, and the loss of them has wounded me too deeply to be easily healed. *Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.* The ways of heaven are dark and intricate, but you may remember the words which, many years ago, you and I fondly admired, and which, upon many occasions, I have found advantage in recollecting.

> "Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear,
> And take with guilt, what guiltless I might share?"

I have a great opinion of your knowledge and judgment, from long experience, concerning the channels and islands in Boston harbor; but I confess your opinion, that the harbor might be blocked up, and seamen and soldiers made prisoners at discretion, was too bold and enterprising for me, who am not very apt to startle at a daring proposal; but I believe I may safely promise you powder enough, in a little time, for any purpose whatever. We are assured, in the strongest manner, of saltpetre and powder in sufficient plenty, another year, of our own make. That both are made in this city, you may report with confidence, for I have seen both; and I have seen a set of very large powder works, and another of saltpetre.

I hope, Sir, we shall never see a total stagnation of commerce for any length of time. Necessity will force open our ports; trade, if I mistake not, will be more free than usual. Your friend, Dr. Franklin, to whom I read your letter, and who desires his kind compliments to you, has been employed in directing the construction of row-galleys for this city. The committee of safety for this province have ordered twenty of them to be built; some of them are finished. I have seen one of them; it has twelve oars on each side. They rowed up the river the first time, four miles in an hour, against a tide which ran down four miles an hour. The Congress have recommended to the colonies to make provision for the defence of their navigation in their harbors, rivers, and on their sea-coasts. Of a floating battery I have no idea — am glad you are contriving one.

You tell me, Sir, that General Lee complained that "he did not find things as the Massachusetts delegates had represented them." What General Lee could mean by this, Sir, I know not. What particular he found different from the representation, I do not know; nor do I know which delegate from the Massachusetts he received a mistaken representation from. I think he should have been particular, that he might not have run the risk of doing an injury. If General Lee should do injustice to two of the Massachusetts delegates, he would commit ingratitude at the same time; for to two of them he certainly owes his promotion in the American army, how great a hazard soever they ran in agreeing to it. I know him very thoroughly, I think, and that he will do great service in our army at the beginning of things, by forming it to order, skill, and discipline. But we shall soon have officers enough.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Philadelphia, 5 November, 1775.

I am under such restrictions, injunctions, and engagements of secrecy respecting every thing which passes in Congress, that I cannot communicate my own thoughts freely to my friends, so far as is necessary to ask their advice and opinions concerning questions, which many of them understand

much better than I do. This, however, is an inconvenience which must be submitted to for the sake of superior advantages.

But I must take the liberty to say, that I think we shall soon attend to maritime affairs and naval preparations. No great things are to be expected at first, but out of a little a great deal may grow.

It is very odd that I, who have spent my days in researches and employments so very different, and who have never thought much of old ocean, or the dominion of it, should be necessitated to make such inquiries; but it is my fate and my duty, and therefore I must attempt it.[1]

I am to inquire what number of seamen may be found in our province, who would probably enlist in the service, either as marines or on board of armed vessels, in the pay of the continent or in the pay of the province, or on board of privateers, fitted out by private adventurers.

I must also entreat you to let me know the names, places of abode, and characters of such persons belonging to any of the seaport towns in our province, as are qualified for officers and commanders of armed vessels.

I want to be further instructed what ships, brigantines, schooners, &c., are to be found in any port of the province, to be sold or hired out, which will be suitable for armed vessels; what their tonnage, the depth of water they draw, their breadth, their decks, &c., and to whom they belong, and what is their age. Further, what places in our province are most secure and best accommodated for building new vessels of force, in case a measure of that kind should be thought of.

The committee have returned much pleased with what they have seen and heard, which shows that their embassy will be productive of happy effects. They say the only disagreeable circumstance was, that their engagements, haste, and constant attention to business was such as prevented them from forming such acquaintances with the gentlemen of our province as they wished. But as Congress was waiting for their return before they could determine upon affairs of the last moment, they had not time to spare.[2]

[1] Compare the Autobiography, vol. iii. pp. 6 – 11.

[2] Mr. Lynch, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Harrison had been chosen a committee of Congress, to repair to camp at Cambridge, on business connected with the maintenance of the army.

They are pretty well convinced, I believe, of several important points, which they and others doubted before.

New Hampshire has leave to assume a government, and so has South Carolina; but this must not be freely talked of as yet, at least from me.

New England will now be able to exert her strength, which a little time will show to be greater than either Great Britain or America imagines. I give you joy of the agreeable prospect in Canada. We have the colors of the seventh regiment as the first fruits of victory.

JOSEPH HAWLEY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Brookfield, 14 November, 1775.

En passant, as Church said in his letter to the regulars, "remember, I never deceived you." If your Congress does not give better encouragement to the privates than at present is held forth to them, you will have no winter army. There must be some small bounty given them on the enlistment. A strange mistaken opinion obtains among the gentlemen of the army from the southward, and if I mistake not, in your Congress, that our privates have too high wages, and the officers too low.

Another thing I just hint. That if your Congress go about to repeal or explain away the resolutions of the 18th of July last, respecting the method of appointing military officers, and vest our council solely with that power, it will throw the colony into the utmost confusion, and end in the destruction of the council.[1] I have wrote Mr. S. Adams on the last head. I am with great regard,[2] &c.

JOSEPH HAWLEY.

[1] The resolutions relating to this point are as follows:

"That all officers above the rank of a captain be appointed by the respective provincial assemblies or conventions, or in their recess by the committees of safety appointed by said assemblies or conventions.

"Where, in any colony, a militia is already formed under regulations approved of by the convention of such colony, or by such assemblies as are annually elective, we refer to the discretion of such convention or assembly, either to adopt the foregoing regulations in the whole or in part, or to continue their former, as they, on consideration of all circumstances, shall think best."

[2] Indorsed on the back of this letter by Mr. Adams:

"Received this letter at dinner, 4 o'clock, Saturday, 25th November, 1775.

TO JAMES OTIS.[1]

Philadelphia, 23 November, 1775.

SIR, — I had the honor of your letter of November 11th by express, and am very sorry to learn that any difference of sentiment has arisen between the two honorable houses respecting the militia bill, as it is so necessary at this critical moment for the public service.

If I was of opinion that any resolution of Congress now in force was against the claim of the Honorable House, as the Honorable Board have proposed that we should lay the question before Congress, I should think it my duty to do it. But it appears to me that, supposing the two resolutions to clash, the last ought to be considered as binding, and as by this, it is left in the "discretion of the assembly either to adopt the foregoing resolutions in the whole or in part, or to continue their former, as they on consideration of all circumstances shall think fit," I think it plain that the Honorable Board may comply with the desire of the Honorable House, if in their discretion they think fit.

I am the more confirmed in the opinion that it is unnecessary to lay this matter before Congress, as they have lately advised the colonies of New Hampshire, and one more, if they think it necessary, to establish such forms of government as they shall judge best calculated to promote the happiness of the people. Besides, the Congress are so pressed with business, and engaged upon questions of greater moment, that I should be unwilling, unless in a case of absolute necessity, to interrupt them by a question of this kind, not to mention that I would not wish to make known, so publicly and extensively, that a controversy had so soon arisen between the branches of our new government.

I have had frequent consultations with my colleagues since

Yesterday morning, *i. e.* Friday, November 24th, Paul Revere went off from this place with my letter to the Board, in which I gave it as my opinion that the council might give up the point in dispute with the House about the appointment of militia officers, and that the resolution of Congress mentioned in this letter was so clear that we need not apply to that assembly for any explanation."

[1] The elder, as President of the Council, which had proposed that its dispute with the House about the right of appointing military officers should be submitted to the consideration of the continental Congress.

the receipt of your letter upon this subject; but as we are not unanimous,[1] I think it my duty to write my private sentiments as soon as possible. If either of my colleagues shall think fit to propose the question to Congress, I shall there give my candid opinion, as I have done to you.

I have the honor to be, with great respect to the Honorable Board, &c.

TO JOSEPH HAWLEY.

Philadelphia, 25 November, 1775.

This afternoon, at five o'clock, I received your kind letter of November 14th, dated at Brookfield, which was the more agreeable because such favors from you, short as this is, are very rare.

You tell me, Sir, that "we shall have no winter army, if our Congress does not give better encouragement to the privates than at present is held forth to them," and that "there must be some small bounty given them on the enlistment." What encouragement is held forth, or at least has been, I know not; but before this time, no doubt, they have been informed of the ultimatum of the Congress. No bounty is offered. Forty shillings lawful money per month, after much altercation, is allowed. It is undoubtedly true that an opinion prevails among the gentlemen of the army from the southward, and indeed throughout all the colonies, excepting New England, that the pay of the privates is too high, and that of the officers too low; so that you may easily conceive the difficulties we have had to surmount. You may depend upon it that this has cost many an anxious day and night; and the utmost that could be done, has been. We cannot suddenly alter the temper, principles, opinions, or prejudices of men. The characters of gentlemen in the four New England colonies, differ as much from those in the others, as that of the common people differs; that is, as much as several

[1] Samuel Adams wrote to the same effect. Messrs. Hancock and Cushing were in favor of submitting the matter to the consideration of Congress, and addressed a joint letter, explaining their views, to the council. All the letters are in the archives of Massachusetts.

distinct nations almost. Gentlemen, men of sense or any kind of education, in the other colonies, are much fewer in proportion than in New England.

Gentlemen in other colonies have large plantations of slaves, and the common people among them are very ignorant and very poor. These gentlemen are accustomed, habituated to higher notions of themselves, and the distinction between them and the common people, than we are. And an instantaneous alteration of the character of a colony, and that temper and those sentiments which its inhabitants imbibed with their mother's milk, and which have grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, cannot be made without a miracle. I dread the consequences of this dissimilitude of character, and without the utmost caution on both sides, and the most considerate forbearance with one another, and prudent condescension on both sides, they will certainly be fatal. An alteration of the southern Constitutions, which must certainly take place if this war continues, will gradually bring all the continent nearer and nearer to each other in all respects. But this is the most critical moment we have yet seen. This winter will cast the die. For God's sake, therefore, reconcile our people to what has been done, for you may depend upon it that nothing more can be done here, and I should shudder at the thought of proposing a bounty. A burnt child dreads the fire. The pay of the officers is raised; that of a captain to twenty-six dollars and one third per month. Lieutenants and ensigns in proportion. Regimental officers not raised.

You then hint that "if Congress should repeal or explain away the resolutions of 18th July, respecting the appointment of military officers, and vest the council with the sole power, it would throw the colony into confusion, and end in the destruction of the council."

The day before yesterday I wrote a letter to the Honorable Board, in answer to one from their President, by order, to us upon that subject, which letter Revere carried from this city yesterday morning. Therein I candidly gave my opinion to their honors, that our resolution was clear and plain, that the colony might use its own discretion, and therefore that they might yield this point to the House. And that the point was so plain, I did not see the least occasion for laying the contro-

versy before Congress. But, my dear friend, I must take the freedom to tell you, that the same has happened upon this occasion, which has happened upon a thousand others. After taking a great deal of pains with my colleague, your friend Mr. Cushing, I could not get him to agree with the rest of us in writing a joint letter, nor could I get him to say what opinion he would give, if it was moved in Congress. What he has written I know not. But it is very hard to be linked and yoked eternally with people, who have either no opinions, or opposite opinions, and to be plagued with the opposition of our own colony to the most necessary measures, at the same time that you have all the monarchical superstition and the aristocratical domination of nine other colonies to contend with.[1]

TO MRS. MERCY WARREN.[2]

Philadelphia, 25 November, 1775.

MADAM, — I had the pleasure of yours of Nov. 4th, several days ago.

You know, Madam, that I have no pleasure or amusement which has any charms for me. Balls, assemblies, concerts, cards, horses, dogs, never engaged any part of my attention or concern. Nor am I ever happy in large and promiscuous companies. Business alone, with the intimate, unreserved conversation of a very few friends, books, and familiar correspondence, have ever engaged all my time; and I have no pleasure, no ease, in any other way. In this place, I have no opportunity to meddle with books, only in the way of business. The conversation I have here, is all in the ceremonious, reserved, impenetrable way.

Thus I have sketched a character for myself, of a morose philosopher and a surly politician, neither of which is very amiable or respectable, but, yet there is too much truth in it, and from it you will easily believe that I have very little pleasure here, excepting in the correspondence of my friends; and among these, I assure you, Madam, there is none whose letters

[1] Copy incomplete.

[2] The wife of James Warren, and the sister of James Otis.

I read with more pleasure and instruction than yours. I wish it was in my power to write you oftener than I do, but I am really engaged in constant business from seven to ten in the morning in committee, from ten to four in Congress, and from six to ten again in committee. Our assembly is scarcely numerous enough for the business; everybody is engaged, all day in Congress, and all the morning and evening in committees. I mention this, Madam, as an apology for not writing you so often as I ought; and as a reason for my request that you would not wait for my answers.

The dispute you mention between the House and Board, I hope will be easily settled. Yet I believe the Board acted with great honor and integrity, and with a wise design and a virtuous resolution to do nothing that should endanger the Union. But I am clear that it is best the two Houses should join in the appointment of officers of militia, and I am equally clear that the resolve of Congress was intended to leave it to the discretion of the colony to adopt such a mode as should please themselves; and I have done myself the honor to write these sentiments to the Board, who were pleased to write to us upon the occasion.

Am obliged to you for your account of the state of things in Boston. I am ever anxious about our friends who remain there, and nothing is ever more acceptable to me than to learn what passes there.

The inactivity of the two armies is not very agreeable to me. Fabius's *cunctando* was wise and brave. But, if I had submitted to it in his situation, it would have been a cruel mortification to me. Zeal, and fire, and activity, and enterprise, strike my imagination too much. I am obliged to be constantly on my guard; yet the heat within will burst forth at times.

The characters drawn in your last, entertained me very agreeably. They were taken off by a nice and penetrating eye. I hope you will favor me with more of these characters. I wish I could draw a number of characters for your inspection. I should, perhaps, daub on the paint too thick, but the features would be very strong.

The General[1] is amiable, and accomplished, and judicious, and cool; you will soon know the person and character of his lady. I hope she has as much ambition for her husband's glory

[1] Washington

as Portia and Marcia[1] have, and then — the Lord have mercy on the souls of Howe and Burgoyne, and all the troops in Boston!

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Watertown, 6 January, 1776.

As your Excellency has asked my opinion of General Lee's plan, as explained in his letter of the 5th instant, I think it my duty to give it, although I am obliged to do it in more haste than I could wish.

I suppose the only questions which arise upon that letter, are, whether the plan is practicable, whether it is expedient, and whether it lies properly within your Excellency's authority, without further directions from Congress.

Of the practicability of it, I am very ill qualified to judge; but were I to hazard a conjecture, it would be, that the enterprise would not be attended with much difficulty. The Connecticut people, who are very ready upon such occasions, in conjunction with the friends of liberty in New York, I should think might easily accomplish the work.

That it is expedient, and even necessary to be done by some authority or other, I believe will not be doubted by any friend of the American cause, who considers the vast importance of that City, Province, and the North River, which is in it, in the progress of this war. As it is the *nexus* of the northern and southern Colonies, as a kind of key to the whole continent, as it is a passage to Canada, to the Great Lakes, and to all the Indian nations, no effort to secure it ought to be omitted.

That it is within the limits of your Excellency's command, is, in my mind, perfectly clear. Your commission constitutes you commander of all the forces now raised, or to be raised, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the army for the defence of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof; and you are vested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service.

[1] These were names by which Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Warren were designated in the familiar letters of their friends during the revolution.

Now if upon Long Island there is a body of people, who have arms in their hands, and are intrenching themselves, professedly to oppose the American system of defence, who are supplying our enemies both of the army and navy, in Boston and elsewhere, as I suppose is undoubtedly the fact, no man can hesitate to say that this is a hostile invasion of American liberty, as much as that now made in Boston. Nay, those people are guilty of the very invasion in Boston, as they are constantly aiding, abetting, comforting, and assisting the army there, and that in the most essential manner, by supplies of provisions.

If in the city a body of tories are waiting only for a force to protect them, to declare themselves on the side of our enemies, it is high time that city was secured. The Jersey troops have already been ordered into that city by the Congress, and are there undoubtedly under your command, ready to assist in this service. That New York is within your command, as much as the Massachusetts, cannot bear a question. Your Excellency's superiority in the command over the Generals in the Northern Department, as it is called, has been always carefully preserved in Congress, although the necessity of despatch has sometimes induced them to send instructions directly to them, instead of first sending them to your Excellency, which would have occasioned a circuit of many hundreds of miles, and have lost much time.

Upon the whole, Sir, my opinion is, that General Lee's is a very useful proposal, and will answer many good ends.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 15 January, 1776.

Although I have at present but little leisure, I cannot omit writing you a few lines by this express. I have seen certain instructions which were given by the capital of the colony of New Hampshire to its delegates in their provincial congregation, the spirit of which I am not altogether pleased with. There is one part of them, at least, which I think discovers a

timidity which is unbecoming a people oppressed and insulted as they are, and who, at their own request, have been advised and authorized by Congress to set up and exercise government in such form as they should judge most conducive to their own happiness. It is easy to understand what they mean, when they speak of "perfecting a form of government *stable* and *permanent*." They indeed explain themselves, by saying that "*they should prefer the government of Congress* (their provincial convention) till quieter times." The reason they assign for it, I fear, will be considered as showing a readiness to condescend to the humors of their enemies; and their publicly, expressly, and totally disavowing independence, either on the nation, or the *man* who insolently and perseveringly demands the surrender of their liberties, with the bayonet pointed at their breasts, may be considered to argue a servility and baseness of soul, for which language doth not afford an epithet. It is by indiscreet resolutions and publications, that the friends of America have too often given occasion to their enemies to injure her cause. I hope, however, that the town of Portsmouth doth not, in this instance, speak the sense of that colony. I wish, if it be not too late, that you would write your sentiments of the subject to our worthy friend, Mr. L——,[1] who, I suppose, is now in Portsmouth. If that colony should take a wrong step, I fear it would wholly defeat a design, which, I confess, I have much at heart.[2]

A motion was made in Congress the other day, to the following purpose; "That, whereas we had been charged with aiming at independency, a committee should be appointed to explain to the people at large, the principles and grounds of our opposition," &c. The motion alarmed me. I thought Congress had already been explicit enough, and was apprehensive that we might get ourselves upon dangerous ground. Some of us prevailed so far as to have the matter postponed, but could not prevent the assigning a day to consider it. I may perhaps have been wrong in opposing this motion; and I ought the rather to suspect it, because the majority of your colony, as well as of the Congress, were of a different opinion.

[1] Langdon. The instructions alluded to are printed in Force's *American Archives*, 4th series, vol. iv. c. 459.

[2] See Gordon's History of the American War, vol. ii. pp. 168–171. The author, from the coincidence in the language, must have had access to this letter.

I had lately some free conversation with an eminent gentleman, whom you well know, and whom your Portia in one of her letters admired, if I recollect right, for his *expressive silence*, about a confederation; a matter which our much valued friend Colonel W——, is very solicitous to have completed.[1] We agreed that it must soon be brought on, and that if all the colonies could not come into it, it had better be done by those of them that inclined to it. I told him that I would endeavor to unite the New England colonies in confederating, if *none* of the rest would join in it. He approved of it, and said, if I succeeded, he would cast in his lot among us. Adieu.

16 January.

As this express did not set off yesterday, according to my expectation, I have the opportunity of acquainting you, that Congress has just received a letter from General Washington, inclosing the copy of an application of our general assembly to him, to order payment to four companies stationed at Braintree, Weymouth, and Hingham. The General says they were never regimented, and he cannot comply with the request of the assembly, without the direction of Congress. A committee is appointed to consider the letter, of which I am one. I fear there will be a difficulty, and therefore I shall endeavor to prevent a report on this part of the letter, unless I shall see a prospect of justice being done to the colony, till I can receive from you authentic evidence of those companies having been actually employed by the continental officers, as I conceive they have been, in the service of the continent. I wish you would inform me whether the two companies stationed at Chelsea and Malden were paid out of the continent's chest. I suppose they were, and if so, I cannot see reason for any hesitation about the payment of these. I wish also to know how many men our colony is at the expense of maintaining for the defence of its sea-coasts. Pray let me have some intelligence from you of the colony which we represent. You are sensible of the danger it has frequently been in of suffering greatly for want of regular information.

[1] The first allusion is to Dr. Franklin; the second, probably, to George Wythe, as Gordon says the person was from Virginia.

TO JAMES OTIS.

Philadelphia, 29 April, 1776.

Sir,— As the day of the general election draws nigh, I think it my duty to express my grateful acknowledgments to the honorable electors of the last year, for the honor they did me in choosing me into the council. My station in the continental Congress has made it impossible for me to attend my duty at the honorable board; and as the same cause must prevent my attendance during a great part of the ensuing year, and the dangers and distresses of the times will require the assistance of the whole number, I cannot think it becoming in me to deprive the colony of the advice of a counsellor, for the sake of keeping open a seat for me. I must therefore beg the favor of you, to make my resignation known to the two honorable Houses, and request them to choose another gentleman to that honorable seat, who will be able to discharge the duties of it.

I am, with great respect to the two honorable Houses, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

John Adams.

R. H. LEE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Williamsburgh, 18 May, 1776.

Inclosed you have a printed resolve, which passed our convention, to the infinite joy of our people. The resolve for independency has not that peremptory and decided air I could wish.[1] Perhaps the proviso which reserves to this colony the power of forming its own government, may be questionable as to its fitness. Would not a uniform plan of government, prepared for America by the Congress, and approved by the colonies, be a surer foundation of unceasing harmony to the whole? However, such as they are, the exultation here was extreme. The British flag on the capitol was immediately struck, and the continental hoisted in its room. The troops were drawn out, and we had a discharge of artillery and small arms.

[1] It is moderate in tone, but sufficiently comprehensive. It is printed *in* Force's *American Archives*, 4th series, vol. vi. c. 1524.

If Hopkins's fleet were in Chesapeake Bay, Dunmore's fleet might be taken. My compliments to Mr. S. Adams and Mr. Paine. I am, Sir, your respectful, humble servant,

RICHARD H. LEE.

TO JAMES SULLIVAN.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1776.

Your favors of May 9th and 17th are now before me; and I consider them as the commencement of a correspondence which will not only give me pleasure, but may be of service to the public, as in my present station I stand in need of the best intelligence, and the advice of every gentleman of abilities and public principles in the colony which has seen fit to place me here.

Our worthy friend, Mr. Gerry, has put into my hands a letter from you, of the sixth of May, in which you consider the principles of representation and legislation, and give us hints of some alterations, which you seem to think necessary, in the qualification of voters.

I wish, Sir, I could possibly find time to accompany you, in your investigation of the principles upon which a representative assembly stands, and ought to stand, and in your examination whether the practice of our colony has been conformable to those principles. But, alas! Sir, my time is so incessantly engrossed by the business before me, that I cannot spare enough to go through so large a field; and as to books, it is not easy to obtain them here; nor could I find a moment to look into them, if I had them.

It is certain, in theory, that the only moral foundation of government is, the consent of the people. But to what an extent shall we carry this principle? Shall we say that every individual of the community, old and young, male and female, as well as rich and poor, must consent, expressly, to every act of legislation? No, you will say, this is impossible. How, then, does the right arise in the majority to govern the minority, against their will? Whence arises the right of the men to govern the women, without their consent? Whence the right of the old to bind the young, without theirs?

But let us first suppose that the whole community, of every age, rank, sex, and condition, has a right to vote. This community is assembled. A motion is made, and carried by a majority of one voice. The minority will not agree to this. Whence arises the right of the majority to govern, and the obligation of the minority to obey?

From necessity, you will say, because there can be no other rule.

But why exclude women?

You will say, because their delicacy renders them unfit for practice and experience in the great businesses of life, and the hardy enterprises of war, as well as the arduous cares of state. Besides, their attention is so much engaged with the necessary nurture of their children, that nature has made them fittest for domestic cares. And children have not judgment or will of their own. True. But will not these reasons apply to others? Is it not equally true, that men in general, in every society, who are wholly destitute of property, are also too little acquainted with public affairs to form a right judgment, and too dependent upon other men to have a will of their own? If this is a fact, if you give to every man who has no property, a vote, will you not make a fine encouraging provision for corruption, by your fundamental law? Such is the frailty of the human heart, that very few men who have no property, have any judgment of their own. They talk and vote as they are directed by some man of property, who has attached their minds to his interest.

Upon my word, Sir, I have long thought an army a piece of clock-work, and to be governed only by principles and maxims, as fixed as any in mechanics; and, by all that I have read in the history of mankind, and in authors who have speculated upon society and government, I am much inclined to think a government must manage a society in the same manner; and that this is machinery too.

Harrington has shown that power always follows property. This I believe to be as infallible a maxim in politics, as that action and reaction are equal, is in mechanics. Nay, I believe we may advance one step farther, and affirm that the balance of power in a society, accompanies the balance of property in land. The only possible way, then, of preserving the balance of power on the side of equal liberty and public virtue, is to

make the acquisition of land easy to every member of society; to make a division of the land into small quantities, so that the multitude may be possessed of landed estates. If the multitude is possessed of the balance of real estate, the multitude will have the balance of power, and in that case the multitude will take care of the liberty, virtue, and interest of the multitude, in all acts of government.

I believe these principles have been felt, if not understood, in the Massachusetts Bay, from the beginning; and therefore I should think that wisdom and policy would dictate in these times to be very cautious of making alterations. Our people have never been very rigid in scrutinizing into the qualifications of voters, and I presume they will not now begin to be so. But I would not advise them to make any alteration in the laws, at present, respecting the qualifications of voters.

Your idea that those laws which affect the lives and personal liberty of all, or which inflict corporal punishment, affect those who are not qualified to vote, as well as those who are, is just. But so they do women, as well as men; children, as well as adults. What reason should there be for excluding a man of twenty years eleven months and twenty-seven days old, from a vote, when you admit one who is twenty-one? The reason is, you must fix upon some period in life, when the understanding and will of men in general, is fit to be trusted by the public. Will not the same reason justify the state in fixing upon some certain quantity of property, as a qualification?

The same reasoning which will induce you to admit all men who have no property, to vote, with those who have, for those laws which affect the person, will prove that you ought to admit women and children; for, generally speaking, women and children have as good judgments, and as independent minds, as those men who are wholly destitute of property; these last being to all intents and purposes as much dependent upon others, who will please to feed, clothe, and employ them, as women are upon their husbands, or children on their parents.

As to your idea of proportioning the votes of men, in money matters, to the property they hold, it is utterly impracticable. There is no possible way of ascertaining, at any one time, how much every man in a community is worth; and if there was, so fluctuating is trade and property, that this state of it would

change in half an hour. The property of the whole community is shifting every hour, and no record can be kept of the changes.

Society can be governed only by general rules. Government cannot accommodate itself to every particular case as it happens, nor to the circumstances of particular persons. It must establish general comprehensive regulations for cases and persons. The only question is, which general rule will accommodate most cases and most persons.

Depend upon it, Sir, it is dangerous to open so fruitful a source of controversy and altercation as would be opened by attempting to alter the qualifications of voters; there will be no end of it. New claims will arise; women will demand a vote; lads from twelve to twenty-one will think their rights not enough attended to; and every man who has not a farthing, will demand an equal voice with any other, in all acts of state. It tends to confound and destroy all distinctions, and prostrate all ranks to one common level.

TO BENJAMIN HICHBORN.

Philadelphia, 29 May, 1776.

Your agreeable favor of 20th May, was handed me yesterday, and it gave me much pleasure, on various accounts; one particularly, as it gave me evidence of your existence, which for some time past you have suffered to remain problematical. I have long expected letters from you, but yet I cannot find fault, because I believe I am much in your debt. However, if you had considered the situation I am in, surrounded with demands for all, and more than all, my time, you would not have waited for regular payments from me.

I am sorry to see you complain of suspicions. I hoped they were forgotten. Indeed, I think that upon your return they ought to have vanished.[1] I have none, nor am I in the least degree afraid of censure on your account, nor of losing a thread of influence. Fortified in innocence, a man should set ground-

[1] This alludes to the letters intercepted in the hands of Mr. Hichborn. See the Diary, vol. ii. p. 411.

less censures at defiance; and as to influence, the more a man has of it, at least of such as mine, if I have any, the more unfortunate he is. If by influence is understood the power of doing good to the public, or of serving men of merit, this influence is devoutly to be wished by every benevolent mind. But very little of this kind of influence has ever fallen to my share.

* * * * * * *

I am much pleased with your spirited project of driving away the wretches from the harbor, and never shall be happy till I hear it is done, and the very entrance fortified impregnably. I cannot bear that an unfriendly flag or mast should be in sight of Bacon Hill.

You are "checked by accounts from the southward, of a disposition in a great majority to counteract independence." Read the proceedings of Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia, and then judge. The middle colonies have never tasted the bitter cup; they have never smarted, and are therefore a little cooler; but you will see that the colonies are united indissolubly. Maryland has passed a few eccentric resolves, but these are only flashes which will soon expire.[1] The proprietary governments are not only encumbered with a large body of Quakers, but are embarrassed by a proprietary interest; both together clog their operations a little, but these clogs are falling off, as you will soon see.

I dread the spirit of innovation which I fear will appear in our new and numerous representative body. It is much to be desired that their attention may at present be more fixed upon the defence of the province and military operations, than upon opening sources of endless altercation. Unanimity, in this time of calamity and danger, is of great importance. You ask my sentiments of the political system to be adopted. My opinion, I am very certain, will not be followed. We have able men in the colony, but I am much afraid they will not be heard. I hope a Governor and Lieutenant-Governor will be chosen; and that they will be respectable for their fortune, as well as abilities and integrity, if such can be found. The Judges, I hope, will be made independent both for the duration and emoluments of

[1] These resolves were passed on the 16th of May, confirming the instructions given in January preceding to the delegates, to oppose a declaration of independence. Force's *American Archives*, Fourth series, vol. vi. c. 463.

office. There is nothing of more importance than this, but yet there is nothing less likely to be done.

How the representation will be settled, I cannot guess; but I really hope they will not attempt any material alteration in the qualification of voters. This will open a door for endless disputes, and I am much afraid, for numberless corruptions.

I wish I could be at home at this important period. But you will remember that all the other colonies have Constitutions to frame, and what is of infinitely greater delicacy, intricacy, and importance, the continent has a Constitution to form. If I could be of some little use at home, I may be of more here at present.

You kindly and politely express a concern for my health, and, if you have any regard for me, it is not without reason. I have been here four months, during which time I have never once been on horseback, and have found but little time to walk. Such uninterrupted attention to cares and perplexities of various kinds, is enough to destroy a more robust body than mine; but I cannot excuse myself from these duties, and I must march forward until it comes to my turn to fall. Indeed if a few things more were fully accomplished, I should think it my duty to ask leave of my constituents to return home to my garden.

The moment I can see every colony in possession and actual exercise of all the powers of government, and a confederation well settled for all the colonies, under a Congress with powers clearly defined and limited, and sufficient preparation and provision made for defence against the force which is coming against us, that moment I shall return to my family, from which I have been too long divorced. But whether my constitution will hold out so long, must be left to him that made it, to whose wisdom and goodness I cheerfully submit.

N. B. The petition from the independent corps in Boston, gave me great pleasure, and is much to their honor. I did my endeavor to get the prayer granted, but it is at last left to the General.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Philadelphia, 30 May, 1776.

Yours of the 20th, was handed me by the last post. I congratulate you upon the first modern election, on the last Wednesday in May, of counsellors as at the first. I could not avoid indulging myself yesterday in imagination with my friends in Boston, upon an occasion so joyful. I presume you must have have had a very solemn and ceremonious election, and wish that no interruption may ever hereafter take place, like that of the last year.

You have given me great pleasure by your account of the spirit and activity of our people, their skill and success in fortifying the town and harbor. But there are several things still wanting, in my judgment. I never shall be happy until every unfriendly flag is driven out of sight, and the Light House Island, George's and Lovell's Islands, and the east end of Long Island, are secured. Fire-ships and rafts will be of no service, without something to cover and protect them from the boats of the men-of-war. Galleys are the best engines in the world for this purpose. Colonel Quincy has the best idea of these galleys, of any man I know. I believe he has a perfect idea of the Turkish and Venetian galleys; some of these are as large as British men-of-war, but some are small. Galleys might be built and armed with heavy cannon, thirty-six or forty-two pounders, which would drive away a ship of almost any size, number of guns, or weight of metal. The dexterity of our people in sea matters, must produce great things, if it had any person to guide it, and stimulate it. A kind of dodging Indian fight might be maintained among the islands in our harbor, between such galleys and the men-of-war.

Whether you have any person sufficiently acquainted with the composition of those combustibles which are usually put into fire-ships and rafts, I don't know. If you have not, it would be worth while to send some one here to inquire and learn. At least, let me know it; and although I have a demand upon me for an hour where I have a minute to spare, yet will I be at the pains, though I neglect other things, of informing myself as well as I can here, and send you what I learn.

We are making the best provision we can for the defence of America. I believe we shall make provision for 70,000 men in the three departments, the northern, including Canada, the middle, and the southern. The die is cast. We must all be soldiers, and fight *pro aris et focis*. I hope there is not a gentleman in the Massachusetts Bay, not even in the town of Boston, who thinks himself too good to take his firelock and his spade. Such imminent dangers level all distinctions. You must, before now, have seen some important resolutions of this Congress, as well as of separate colonies. Before many weeks, you will see more.

Remember me, with every sentiment of friendship and respect, to all who deserve well of their country. These are all my friends, and I have and will have no other.

P. S. Galleys to be used merely in Boston harbor, the less they are, the better, provided they are large and strong enough to sustain the weight of the gun, and the shock of the explosion. The galleys first built in Delaware River were too large to be handy, and too small to live and work in a sea. We are building two of a different construction. They are to carry two large guns in the stern, and two in front, and five or six three pounders on each side, besides swivels. They are built to put to sea, live and fight in a swell or a storm. They are narrow, but almost one hundred feet long.

TO ISAAC SMITH.

Philadelphia, 1 June, 1776.

Your favors of May 14th and 22d are now before me. The first I showed to Mr. Morris, as soon as I received it. The last contains intelligence from Halifax of the straits to which our enemies are reduced, which I was very glad to learn.

I am very happy to learn from you and some others of my friends, that Boston is securely fortified; but still I cannot be fully satisfied until I hear that every unfriendly flag is chased out of that harbor.

Cape Ann, I am sensible, is a most important post; and if

the enemy should possess themselves of it, they might distress the trade of the colony to a great degree. For which reason, I am determined to do every thing in my power to get it fortified at the continental expense. I can not be confident that I shall succeed, but it shall not be my fault if I do not. I am very glad you gave me your opinion of the utility of that harbor, and of the practicability of making it secure, because I was not enough acquainted with it before, to speak with precision about it.

Your observations upon the oppressive severity of the old regulations of trade, in subjecting ships and cargoes to confiscation for the indiscretion of a master or mariner, and upon the artifice and corruption which was introduced respecting hospital money, are very just. But if you consider the resolution of Congress, and that of Virginia of the 15th of May, the resolutions of the two Carolinas and Georgia, each of which colonies are instituting new governments under the authority of the people; if you consider what is doing at New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and even in Maryland, which are all gradually forming themselves into order to follow the colonies to the northward and southward, together with the treaties with Hesse, Brunswick, and Waldeck, and the answer to the mayor, &c., of London, I believe you will be convinced that there is little probability of our ever again coming under the yoke of British regulations of trade. The cords which connected the two countries are cut asunder, and it will not be easy to splice them again together.

I agree with you in sentiment that there will be little difficulty in trading with France and Spain, a great deal in dealing with Portugal, and some with Holland. Yet, by very good intelligence, I am convinced that there are great merchants in the United Provinces, and even in Amsterdam, who will contract to supply you with any thing you want, whether merchandise or military stores, by the way of Nieuport and Ostend, two towns which are subject to the Empress of Austria, who has never taken any public notice of the dispute between Britain and us, and has never prohibited her subjects from supplying us with any thing.

There is a gentleman now in this city, a native of it, and a very worthy man, who has been lately in these towns, as well

as Amsterdam, who informs me that he had many conversations there with merchants of figure, and that they assured him they should be glad to contract to furnish us with any supplies, even upon credit, for an interest of four per cent. Other intelligence to the same purpose, with additions of more importance, has been sent here. But the particulars may not be mentioned.

Europe seems to be in a great commotion. Although the appearance of a perfect calm is affected, I think this American contest will light up a general war. What it will end in, God alone knows, to whose wise and righteous providence I cheerfully submit.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Philadelphia, 2 June, 1776.

Your esteemed favor of the 16th of May, came to my hand a few days ago.

You have laid me under obligations, by your ingenious observations upon those books upon military science, which are necessary to be procured in the present circumstances of this country. I have been a long time convinced of the utility of publishing American editions of those writers, and that it is an object of sufficient importance to induce the public to be at the expense of it. But greater objects press in such numbers upon those who think for the public, as St. Drummond[1] expresses it, that this has been hitherto neglected. I could wish that the public would be at the expense, not only of new editions of these authors, but of establishing academies for the education of young gentlemen in every branch of the military art; because I am fully of your sentiment, that we ought to lay foundations, and begin institutions, in the present circumstances of this country, for promoting every art, manufacture, and science, which is necessary for the support of an independent State. We must, for the future, stand upon our own legs, or fall. The

[1] Vol. iii. p. 31 – 32, and the reference in the note.

alienation of affection between the two countries, is at length so great, that if the morals of the British nation, and their political principles, were much purer than they are, it would be scarcely possible to accomplish a cordial reunion with them.

The votes of the Congress, and the proceedings of the colonies, separately, must, before this time, have convinced you that this is the sense of America, with infinitely greater unanimity than could have been credited by many people, a few months ago. Those few persons, indeed, who have attended closely to the proceedings of the several colonies for a number of years past, and reflected deeply upon the causes of this mighty contest, have foreseen that such an unanimity would take place as soon as a separation should become necessary. These are not at all surprised, while many others really are, and some affect to be, astonished at the phenomenon.

The policy of Rome in carrying their arms to Carthage, while Hannibal was at the gates of their capital, was wise, and justified by the event, and would deserve imitation, if we could march into the country of our enemies. But, possessed as they are of the dominion of the sea, it is not easy for us to reach them. Yet, it is possible that a bold attempt might succeed; but we have not yet sufficient confidence in our own power or skill, to encourage enterprises of the daring, hardy kind. Such often prosper, and are always glorious. But shall I give offence if I say, that our arms have kept an even pace with our counsels; that both have been rather slow and irresolute? Have either our officers or men, by sea or land, as yet discovered that exalted courage and mature judgment, both of which are necessary for great and splendid actions? Our forces have done very well, considering their poor appointments, and our infancy. But I may say to you, that I wish I could see less attention to trifles, and more to the great essentials of the service, both in the civil and military departments. I am no prophet, if we are not compelled by necessity, before the war is over, to become more men of business, and less men of pleasure. I have formed great expectations from a number of gentlemen of genius, sentiment, and education, of the younger sort, whom I know to be in the army, and wish that additions might be made to the number. We have had some examples of magnanimity and bravery, it is true, which would have done honor to any

age or country; but these have been accompanied with a want of skill and experience which entitles the hero to compassion, at the same time that he has our admiration. For my own part, I never think of Warren or Montgomery, without lamenting, at the same time that I admire, that inexperience to which perhaps they both owed their glory.

TO PATRICK HENRY.

Philadelphia, 3 June, 1776.

My Dear Sir, — I had this morning the pleasure of yours of 20 May.[1] The little pamphlet you mention is *nullius filius;* and, if I should be obliged to maintain it, the world will not expect that I should own it. My motive for inclosing it to you, was not the value of the present, but as a token of friendship, and more for the sake of inviting your attention to the subject, than because there was any thing in it worthy your perusal. The subject is of infinite moment, and perhaps more than adequate to the abilities of any man in America. I know of none so competent to the task as the author of the first Virginia resolutions against the stamp act, who will have the glory with posterity, of beginning and concluding this great revolution. Happy Virginia, whose Constitution is to be framed by so masterly a builder! Whether the plan of the pamphlet is not too popular, whether the elections are not too frequent for your colony, I know not. The usages, and genius, and manners of the people must be consulted. And if annual elections of the representatives of the people are sacredly preserved, those elections by ballot, and none permitted to be chosen but inhabitants, residents as well as qualified freeholders of the city, county, parish, town, or borough, for which they are to serve, three essential prerequisites of a free government, the council, or middle branch of the legislature may be triennial, or even septennial, without much inconvenience.

I esteem it an honor and a happiness, that my opinion so often coincides with yours. It has ever appeared to me that

[1] This letter is printed in a note appended to the "Thoughts on Government," here alluded to. Vol. iv. p. 201.

the natural course and order of things was this; for every colony to institute a government; for all the colonies to confederate, and define the limits of the continental Constitution; then to declare the colonies a sovereign state, or a number of confederated sovereign states; and last of all, to form treaties with foreign powers. But I fear we cannot proceed systematically, and that we shall be obliged to declare ourselves independent States, before we confederate, and indeed before all the colonies have established their governments.

It is now pretty clear that all these measures will follow one another in a rapid succession, and it may not perhaps be of much importance which is done first.

The importance of an immediate application to the French court, is clear; and I am very much obliged to you for your hint of the route by the Mississippi.

Your intimation that the session of your representative body would be long, gave me great pleasure, because we all look up to Virginia for examples; and, in the present perplexities, dangers, and distresses of our country, it is necessary that the supreme councils of the colonies should be almost constantly sitting. Some colonies are not sensible of this; and they will certainly suffer for their indiscretion. Events of such magnitude as those which present themselves now in such quick succession, require constant attention and mature deliberation.

The little pamphlet you mention, which was published here as an antidote to the "Thoughts on Government," and which is whispered to have been the joint production of one native of Virginia, and two natives of New York, I know not how truly, will make no fortune in the world.[1] It is too absurd to be considered twice; it is contrived to involve a colony in eternal war.

The dons, the bashaws, the grandees, the patricians, the sachems, the nabobs, call them by what name you please, sigh, and groan, and fret, and sometimes stamp, and foam, and curse, but all in vain. The decree is gone forth, and it cannot be recalled, that a more equal liberty than has prevailed in other parts of the earth, must be established in America. That exu-

[1] "An Address to the Convention of the Colony and ancient dominion of Virginia, on the subject of government in general," &c. See vol. iv. p. 202, note.

berance of pride which has produced an insolent domination in a few, a very few, opulent, monopolizing families, will be brought down nearer to the confines of reason and moderation, than they have been used to. This is all the evil which they themselves will endure. It will do them good in this world, and in every other. For pride was not made for man, only as a tormentor.

I shall ever be happy in receiving your advice by letter, until I can be more completely so in seeing you here in person, which I hope will be soon.

TO HUGH HUGHES.

Philadelphia, 4 June, 1776.

Yours of May 29, came safe to hand, and I am much pleased to find that your citizens have behaved with so much wisdom, unanimity, and spirit. Yet I was disappointed that you did not inclose their votes.[1]

I am very glad that Mr. J. is with you, and hope he will be of great service there; but will he not be for making your governor and counsellors for life, or during good behavior? I should dread such a Constitution in these perilous times, because however wise, and brave, and virtuous these rulers may be at their first appointment, their tempers and designs will be very apt to change, and then they may have it in their power to betray the people, who will have no means of redress. The people ought to have frequently the opportunity, especially in these dangerous times, of considering the conduct of their leaders, and of approving or disapproving. You will have no safety without it.

The province of Pennsylvania is in a good way, and will soon become an important branch of the Confederation. The large body of the people will be possessed of more power and

[1] Mr. Hughes announced in his letter, that the citizens of New York "had a meeting on Monday evening last, when it was agreed, without a dissenting voice, to instruct our Convention on that most important of all sublunary affairs, in order that application may be made to your honorable House."

This probably refers to the vote of the General Committee of Mechanics in Union, of the city and county of New York, whose address is printed in Force's *American Archives*, 4th series, vol. vi. c. 614.

importance, and a proud junto of less; and yet justice will, I hope, be done to all.

I wish you happiness, promotion, and reputation in the service.[1]

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Philadelphia, 4 June, 1776.

Sir,— Your favor of 18 May, inclosing the momentous resolution of your wise and patriotic convention, together with the *American Crisis*, came duly to hand, and yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving the proceedings of the House of Burgesses. I thank you, Sir, for both these esteemed favors.

Is it not a little remarkable, that this Congress and your Convention should come to resolutions so nearly similar, on the same day? and that even the Convention of Maryland should, in that critical moment, have proceeded so far as to abolish the oaths of allegiance, notwithstanding that some of their other resolves are a little eccentric?

Your resolution is consistent and decisive; it is grounded on true principles, which are fairly and clearly stated; and in my humble opinion, the proviso, which reserves to yourselves the institution of your own government, is fit and right, this being a matter of which the colonies are the best judges, and a privilege which each colony ought to reserve to itself. Yet, after all, I believe there will be much more uniformity in the governments which all of them will adopt, than could have been expected a few months ago.

The joy and exultation which was expressed upon that great occasion, did honor to their good sense and public virtue. It was an important event, at a critical time, in which the interest and happiness of themselves and their posterity were much concerned.

Hopkins's fleet has been very unfortunate; a dreadful sickness has raged among his men, and disabled him from putting more than two of his vessels to sea. To what place they are gone, I know not; perhaps to cruise for transports.

[1] Mr. Hughes had been appointed by General Schuyler Assistant Quartermaster-General of his forces.

TO WILLIAM CUSHING.

Philadelphia, 9 June, 1776.

I had yesterday the honor of your letter of the 28th May, and I read it with all that pleasure which we feel on the revival of an old friendship, when we meet a friend whom for a long time we have not seen.

You do me great honor, Sir, in expressing a pleasure at my appointment to the bench; but be assured that no circumstance relating to that appointment, has given me so much concern as my being placed at the head of it, in preference to another, who in my opinion was so much better qualified for it, and entitled to it. I did all in my power to have it otherwise, but I was told that our sovereign lords the people must have it so. When, or where, or how, the secret imagination seized you, as you say it did heretofore, that I was destined to that place, I cannot conjecture. Nothing, I am sure, was further from my thoughts or wishes. I am not a little chagrined that Sargeant has declined. I had great hopes from his solid judgment and extensive knowledge. Paine has acted in his own character, although I think not consistent with the public character which he has been made to wear. However, I confess I am not much mortified with this, for the bench will not be the less respectable for having the less wit, humor, drollery, or fun upon it; very different qualities are necessary for that department.[1]

Warren has an excellent head and heart; and since we cannot be favored and honored with the judgment of lawyers, I know not where a better man could have been found; I hope he will not decline; if he should, I hope that Lowell or Dana will be thought of.

I am happy in your appointment of good Mr. Winthrop,[2] whose experience will be useful in that station, and whose conduct and principles have deserved it.

You have my hearty concurrence in telling the jury the nullity of acts of parliament, whether we can prove it by the *jus*

[1] Notwithstanding all which, Mr. Paine subsequently accepted a seat on the bench, and served with dignity and reputation for fourteen years, until 1804.

[2] "We have appointed good Mr. Winthrop, clerk." *Extract from Mr. C.'s letter.*

gladii, or not.[1] I am determined to die of that opinion, let the *jus gladii* say what it will.

The system and rules of the common law must be adopted, I suppose, until the legislature shall make alterations in either; and how much soever I may heretofore have found fault with the powers that were, I suppose I shall be well pleased now to hear submission inculcated to the powers that are. It would give me great pleasure to ride this eastern circuit with you, and prate before you at the bar, as I used to do. But I am destined to another fate, to drudgery of the most wasting, exhausting, consuming kind, that I ever went through in my whole life. Objects of the most stupendous magnitude, and measures in which the lives and liberties of millions yet unborn are intimately interested, are now before us. We are in the very midst of a revolution, the most complete, unexpected, and remarkable, of any in the history of nations. A few important subjects must be despatched before I can return to my family. Every colony must be induced to institute a perfect government. All the colonies must confederate together in some solemn band of union. The Congress must declare the colonies free and independent States, and ambassadors must be sent abroad to foreign courts, to solicit their acknowledgment of us, as sovereign States, and to form with them, at least with some of them, commercial treaties of friendship and alliance. When these things are once completed, I shall think that I have answered the end of my creation, and sing my *nunc dimittis*, return to my farm, family, ride circuits, plead law, or judge causes, just which you please.

The rumors you heard of a reinforcement in Canada, and those you must have heard before now, of many disasters there, are but too true. Canada has been neglected too much, to my infinite grief and regret, and against all the remonstrances which I could make, and many others. This has been owing to causes, which it would tire you to explain, if I was at liberty, which I am not. However, nothing on my part, or that of my colleagues, will be wanting to secure a reverse of fortune there. Dunmore is fled to an island. Our little fleet has had a shock-

[1] "I can tell the grand jury the nullity of acts of parliament, but must leave you to prove it by the more powerful arguments of the *jus gladii divinum*, a power not peculiar to kings or ministers." *Mr. C.'s letter.*

ing sickness, which has disabled so many men, that the commodore has sent on a cruise two of his ships only.

The difficulty of defending so extended a sea-coast, is prodigious, but the spirit of the people is very willing, and they exert themselves nobly in most places. The British men-of-war are distressed for provisions, and even for water, almost everywhere. They have no comfort in any part of America.

My good genius whispers me very often, that I shall enjoy many agreeable hours with you; but fortune often disappoints the hopes which my good genius inspires. But in the mean time, I shall ever be happy to receive a line from you. Should be much obliged to you for some account of occurrences in your eastern circuit. Remember me with every sentiment of respect to the bench, the bar, and all other friends.

TO JOHN LOWELL.

Philadelphia, 12 June, 1776.

Yesterday's post brought me a newspaper of the 3d instant, containing a list of your House and Board; and, upon my word, I read it with more pleasure than I ever read any other list of the two Houses. I do not believe the records of the province can show a more respectable set of representatives or counsellors. Sargeant, Lowell, Pickering, Angier, are great acquisitions in the House; so are Dana and Sewall at the Board, not to mention many other very respectable characters among the new members of each.

From this collection of wise and prudent men I hope great things. I hope that the most vigorous exertions will be made to put the province in the best state of defence. Every seaport in it ought to be fortified in such a manner that you may set the enemy at defiance. To this end, large additions must be made to the cannon of the colony. I wish to know whether they are cast at any furnace in the province; if not, no expense, I think, should be spared to procure them. They are casting them successfully in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island. Another article, essentially necessary, is that of muskets. I

wish that every man in the province, who can work about any part of a gun or bayonet, was set to work. No price should be thought extravagant.

Saltpetre, it seems, you are in a way to procure in sufficient quantities; but sulphur and lead I have not yet learnt to be made among you. I hope you will take effectual measures to make salt. You must do it. The other colonies are too lazy and shiftless to do any thing until you set them the example.

The defence of the colony is the first object. The second is the formation of a Constitution. In this business I presume you will proceed slowly and deliberately. It is a difficult work to achieve; and the spirit of levelling, as well as that of innovation, is afloat. Before I saw the list of the new election, I was under fearful apprehension, I confess. But my mind is now at ease in this respect. There are so many able men in each House, that I think they will have influence enough to prevent any dangerous innovations, and yet to carry any necessary and useful improvements.

Some of you must prepare your stomachs to come to Philadelphia. I am weary, and must ask leave to return to my family, after a little time, and one of my colleagues at least must do the same, or I greatly fear do worse. You and I know very well the fatigues of practice at the bar, but I assure you this incessant round of thinking and speaking upon the greatest subjects that ever employed the mind of man, and the most perplexing difficulties that ever puzzled it, is beyond all comparison more exhausting and consuming.

Our affairs in Canada are in a confused and disastrous situation. But I hope they will not be worse. We have made large requisitions upon you; how you can possibly comply with them I know not; but I hope you will do as much as you can.

We have no resource left, my friend, but our own fortitude and the favor of heaven. If we have the first I have no doubt we shall obtain the last, and these will be sufficient. All ideas of reconciliation or accommodation seem to be gone with the years before the flood.

I have nothing new to communicate but what is in every newspaper, and I began this letter only to make my compliments to you, and ask the favor of your correspondence. But

I have wandered, I know not whither. It is time to subscribe myself your friend and servant.

TO OAKES ANGIER.

Philadelphia, 12 June, 1776.

It was with great pleasure, and perhaps some little mixture of pride, that I read your name among the representatives of Bridgewater, in the Boston Gazette. I rejoiced to find that your townsmen had so much confidence in your abilities and patriotism, and that you had so much confidence in the justice of our cause, and the abilities of America to support it, as to embark your fortune in it. Your country never stood so much in need of men of clear heads and steady hearts to conduct her affairs. Our civil governments as well as military preparations want much improvement, and to this end a most vigilant attention, as well as great patience, caution, prudence, and firmness, is necessary.

You will excuse the freedom of a friend, when I tell you that I have never entertained any doubt that your political principles and public affections corresponded with those of your country. But you know that jealousies and suspicions have been entertained and propagated concerning you. These jealousies arose, I am well persuaded, from an unreserved freedom of conversation, and a social disposition a little addicted to disputation, which was sometimes, perhaps, incautiously indulged. Your present situation, which is conspicuous, and not only exposed to observation but to misconstruction and misrepresentation, will make it necessary for you to be upon your guard.

Let me recommend to you an observation that one of my colleagues is very fond of, "The first virtue of a politician is patience; the second is patience; and the third is patience!" as Demosthenes observed that action was the first, second, and third quality of an orator. You will experience in public life such violent, sudden, and unexpected provocations and disappointments, that if you are not now possessed of all the patience of Job, I would advise you to acquire it as soon as possible.

News I can tell you none. I have written to Colonel Warren, Mr. Sewall, and Mr. Lowell, a few broken hints, upon subjects which I wish you would turn your thoughts to. Be so good as to write me any remarkables in the legislature or the courts of justice.

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Philadelphia, 12 June, 1776.

In the lists of the House and Board I was as much pleased to find your name among the latter, as I was chagrined to find it omitted in the former. This is one among numberless advantages of a middle branch of the legislature, that a place may be found in it for such distinguished friends of their country as are omitted by the people in the choice of their representatives. This is an advantage which Pennsylvania never enjoyed and some ignorant pretenders to the art of building civil governments seem to wish should not prevail in other colonies. But, so far from succeeding, every colony on the continent in their new Constitutions, even Pennsylvania itself, will have a middle branch. I hope you will now go on and complete your government by choosing a governor and lieutenant-governor.

I think the province never had so fair a representation or so respectable a House or Board. You have a great number of ingenious, able men in each. I sincerely congratulate the province upon it, and think it forebodes much good. I am anxious to be informed of the state of the province, and of the progress you make step by step. Should be much obliged to you for a letter now and then.

We are drudging on as usual; sometimes it is seven o'clock before we rise. We have greater things in contemplation than ever; the greatest of all which we ever shall have. Be silent and patient, and time will bring forth, after the usual groans, throes, and pains upon such occasions, a fine child, a fine, vigorous, healthy boy, I presume. God bless him and make him a great, wise, virtuous, pious, rich, and powerful man!

Prepare yourself for vexation enough, for my tour of duty is

almost out; and when it is, you or Lowell, or both, must come here and toil a little, while we take a little breath.

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Philadelphia, 14 June, 1776.

Mr. Bedford put into my hand this moment a card from you, containing a reprehension for the past, and a requisition for the time to come.[1] For the past, I kiss the rod; but from complying with the requisition, at least one part of it, I must be excused. I have no objection to writing you facts, but I would not meddle with characters for the world. A burnt child dreads the fire. I have smarted too severely for a few crude expressions written in a pet to a bosom friend, to venture on such boldnesses again. Besides, if I were to tell you all that I think of all characters, I should appear so ill natured and censorious that I should detest myself. By my soul, I think very heinously, I cannot think of a better word, of some people. They think as badly of me, I suppose; and neither of us care a farthing for that. So the account is balanced, and perhaps, after all, both sides may be deceived, both may be very honest men.

But of all the animals on earth that ever fell in my way, your trimmers, your double-tongued and double-minded men, your disguised folk, I detest most. The devil, I think, has a better title to these, by half, than he has to those who err openly, and are barefaced villains.

Mr. Adams ever was and ever will be glad to see Mr. Chase; but Mr. Chase never was nor will be more welcome than if he should come next Monday or Tuesday fortnight, with the voice of Maryland in favor of independence and a foreign alliance.

[1] As this note is brief, it is given entire:

"Mr. Chase will excuse the late neglect and inattention of Mr. John Adams to him, upon the express condition that in future he constantly communicate to Mr. Chase every matter relating to persons or things. Mr. Chase flatters himself with seeing Mr. Adams on Monday or Tuesday fortnight with the voice of Maryland in favor of independence and a foreign alliance, which are, in Mr. Chase's opinion, the only and best measures to preserve the liberties of America. Direct to Annapolis."

I have never had the honor of knowing many people from Maryland, but by what I have learnt of them and seen of their delegates, they are an open, sincere, and united people. A little obstinate, to be sure, but that is very pardonable, when accompanied with frankness. From all which I conclude that when they shall be convinced of the necessity of those measures, they will all be convinced at once, and afterwards be as active and forward as any, perhaps more so than most.

I have one bone to pick with your colony; I suspect they levelled one of their instructions at my head. This is a distinction of which you may suppose I am not very ambitious. One of your colleagues moved a resolution that no member of Congress should hold any office under any of the new governments, and produced an instruction to make him feel strong.[1] I seconded the motion, with a trifling amendment, that the resolution should be, that no member of Congress should hold any office, civil or military, in the army or in the militia, under any government, old or new. This struck through the assembly like an electric shock, for every member was a governor, or general, or judge, or some mighty thing or other in the militia, or under the old government or some new one. This was so important a matter that it required consideration, and I have never heard another word about it.

The truth, as far as it respects myself, is this. The government of the Massachusetts, without my solicitation and much against my inclination, were pleased some time last summer to nominate me to an office. It was at a time when offices under new governments were not in much demand, being considered rather precarious. I did not refuse this office, although, by accepting it, I must resign another office, which I held under the old government, three times as profitable, because I was well informed, that, if I had refused it, no other man would have accepted it, and this would have greatly weakened, perhaps ruined the new constitution. This is the truth of fact. So that one of the most disinterested and intrepid actions of my whole life has been represented to the people of Maryland to my disadvantage. I told the gentlemen that I should be much obliged, if they would find me a man who would accept of my

[1] See vol. iii. page 26, for the instruction, and further comments upon it. The paper is printed in full in Force's *American Archives*, 4th series, vol. iv. c. 739.

office, or by passing the resolution furnish me with a justification for refusing it. In either case, I would subscribe my renunciation of that office before I left that room. Nay, I would go further, I would vote with them that every member of this Congress should take an oath that he never would accept of any office during life, or procure any office for his father, his son, his brother, or his cousin. So much for egotism!

McKean has returned from the lower counties with full powers. Their instructions are in the same words with the new ones to the delegates of Pennsylvania. New Jersey has dethroned Franklin,[1] and in a letter, which is just come to my hand from indisputable authority, I am told that the delegates from that colony "will vote plump!"[2] Maryland now stands alone. I presume she will soon join company; if not, she must be left alone.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 16 June, 1776.

Your favors of June 2d and 5th, are now before me.

The address to the Convention of Virginia, makes a small fortune in the world. Colonel Henry, in a letter to me, expresses infinite contempt of it,[3] and assures me that the constitution of Virginia will be more like the "Thoughts on Government." I believe, however, they will make the election of their council septennial; that of representatives and governor, annual. But I am amazed to find an inclination so prevalent throughout all the southern colonies, to adopt plans so nearly resembling that in the "Thoughts on Government." I assure you, until the experiment was made, I had no conception of it. But the pride of the haughty must, I see, come down a little in the south.

You suppose "it would not do to have the two regiments you are now raising, converted into continental regiments." But why? Would the officers or men have any objection? If they would not, Congress would have none; this was what I ex-

[1] W. T. Franklin.

[2] See the letter of J. D. Sergeant in volume iii. p. 55, note. As it is dated at Burlington the 15th, the probability is that this letter was not finished until the 16th.

[3] Vol. iv. p. 201.

pected and intended, when the measure was in agitation. Indeed, I thought, that as our battalions, with their arms, were carried to New York and Canada, in the service of the united colonies, the town of Boston and the province ought to be guarded against danger by the united colonies.

You have been since called upon for six thousand militia for Canada and New York. How you will get the men, I know not. The smallpox, I suppose, will be a great discouragement. But we must maintain our ground in Canada. The regulars, if they get full possession of that province, and the navigation of St. Lawrence river above Deschambault, at least above the mouth of the Sorel, will have nothing to interrupt their communication with Niagara, Detroit, Michilimackinac; they will have the navigation of the five great lakes quite as far as the Mississippi River; they will have a free communication with all the numerous tribes of Indians extended along the frontiers of all the colonies, and, by their trinkets and bribes, will induce them to take up the hatchet, and spread blood and fire among the inhabitants; by which means, all the frontier inhabitants will be driven in upon the middle settlements, at a time when the inhabitants of the seaports and coasts will be driven back by the British navy. Is this picture too high colored? Perhaps it is; but surely we must maintain our power in Canada.

You may depend upon my rendering Mr. Winthrop all the service in my power.

I believe it will not be long before all property belonging to British subjects, whether in Europe, the West India islands, or elsewhere, will be made liable to capture. A few weeks may possibly produce great things.

TO ZABDIEL ADAMS.[1]

Philadelphia, 21 June, 1776.

Your letter, Sir, gave me great pleasure, and deserves my most hearty thanks.

I am fully with you in sentiment, that although the authority of the Congress, founded as it has been in reason, honor,

[1] Vol. ii. p. 83, note.

and the love of liberty, has been sufficient to govern the colonies in a tolerable manner, for their defence and protection, yet that it is not prudent to continue very long in the same way; and that a permanent constitution should be formed, and foreign aid obtained. In these points, and thus far, the colonies and their representatives, the Congress, are extremely well united. But concerning a declaration of independency, there is some diversity of sentiment. Two arguments only are urged with any plausibility against such a measure. One is, that it will unite all the inhabitants of Great Britain against us; the other, that it will put us too much in the power of foreign States.

The first has little weight in it, because the people of Great Britain are already as much united against us as they ever are in any thing, and the probability is, that such a declaration would excite still greater divisions and distractions among them.

The second has less weight still; for foreign powers already know that we are as obnoxious to the British court as we can be. They know that parliament have in effect declared us independent, and that we have acted these thirteen months to all intent and purposes as if we were so.

The reports of fifty-five thousand men coming against us, are chiefly ministerial gasconade. However, we have reason to fear that they will send several very powerful armaments against us, and therefore our most strenuous exertions will be necessary as well as our most fervent prayers. America is yet in her infancy, or at least but lately arrived to manhood, and is inexperienced in the perplexing mysteries of policy, as well as the dangerous operations of war.

I assure you, Sir, that your employment in investigating the moral causes of our miseries, and in pointing out the remedies, is devoutly to be wished. There is no station more respectable, nor any so pleasant and agreeable. Those who tread the public stage in characters the most extensively conspicuous, meet with so many embarrassments, perplexities, and disappointments, that they have often reason to wish for the peaceful retreats of the clergy. Who would not wish to exchange the angry contentions of the former for the peaceful contemplations of the closet?

> "Where Contemplation prunes her ruffled wings,
> And the free soul looks down to pity kings."

Who would not exchange the discordant scenes of envy, pride, vanity, malice, revenge, for the sweet consolations of philosophy, the serene composure of the passions, the divine enjoyments of Christian charity and benevolence?

Statesmen, my dear Sir, may plan and speculate for liberty, but it is religion and morality alone, which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free constitution is pure virtue; and if this cannot be inspired into our people in a greater measure than they have it now, they may change their rulers and the forms of government, but they will not obtain a lasting liberty. They will only exchange tyrants and tyrannies. You cannot, therefore, be more pleasantly or usefully employed than in the way of your profession, pulling down the strong-holds of Satan. This is not cant, but the real sentiment of my heart. Remember me with much respect to your worthy family and to all friends.

TO BENJAMIN KENT.

Philadelphia, 22 June, 1776.

Your letters of April 24th[1] and May 26th are before me; both dated at Boston; a circumstance which alone would have given pleasure to a man who has such an attachment to that town, and who has suffered so much anxiety for his friends in their exile from it.

We have not many of the fearful, and still less of the unbelieving among us, how slowly soever you may think we proceed. Is it not a want of faith, or a predominance of fear, which makes some of you so impatient for declarations in words, of what is every day manifested in deeds of the most determined nature and unequivocal signification?

That we are divorced *a vinculo*, as well as from bed and board, is to me very clear. The only question is concerning the proper time for making an explicit declaration in words. Some people must have time to look around them; before,

[1] Printed in vol. ii. p. 291, note.

behind, on the right hand, and on the left; then to think, and, after all this, to resolve. Others see at one intuitive glance into the past and the future, and judge with precision at once. But remember you cannot make thirteen clocks strike precisely alike at the same second.

I am for the most liberal toleration of all denominations of religionists, but I hope that Congress will never meddle with religion further than to say their own prayers, and to fast and give thanks once a year. Let every colony have its own religion without molestation.

The Congress ordered Church[1] to the Massachusetts Council to be let out upon bail. It was represented to them that his health was in a dangerous way, and it was thought he would not now have it in his power to do any mischief. Nobody knows what to do with him. There is no law to try him upon, and no court to try him. I am afraid he deserves more punishment than he will ever meet.

TO NATHANAEL GREENE.

Philadelphia, 22 June, 1776.

Your favor of the 2d instant has lain by me, I suppose, these eighteen days; but I fear I shall often have occasion to make apologies for such omissions, which will never happen from want of respect, but I fear very often for want of time.

Your reasoning to prove the equity and the policy of making provision for the unfortunate officer or soldier, is extremely just, and cannot be answered; and I hope that when we get a little over the confusions arising from the revolutions which are now taking place in the colonies, and get an American Constitution formed, something will be done. I should be much obliged to you for your thoughts upon the subject. What pensions should be allowed, or what other provision made. Whether it would be expedient to establish a hospital, &c. It is a matter of importance, and the plan should be well digested.

I think with you, that every colony should furnish its propor-

[1] Dr. Church.

tion of men, and I hope it will come to this. But at present some colonies have such bodies of Quakers, and Mennonists, and Moravians, who are principled against war, and others have such bodies of tories, or cowards, or unprincipled people, who will not wage war, that it is, as yet, impossible.

The dispute is, as you justly observe, in all human probability but in its infancy. We ought, therefore, to study to bring every thing in the military department into the best order. Fighting is not the greatest branch of the science of war. Men must be furnished with good and wholesome provisions in sufficient plenty. They must be well paid. They must be well clothed, and well covered with barracks and tents. They must be kept warm, with suitable fuel. In these respects we have not been able to do so well as we wished. But why the regiments have not been furnished with proper agents, I do not know. Congress is ever ready to hearken to the advice of the general, and if he had recommended such officers, they would have been appointed. Colonels should neither be agents nor sutlers. Congress have lately voted that there shall be regimental paymasters, who shall keep the accounts of the regiments. If any other agent is necessary, let me know it. Good officers are no doubt the soul of an army, but our difficulty is to get men. Officers present themselves in supernumerary abundance.

As to pay, there is no end to the desire and demand of it. Is there not too much extravagance and too little economy among the officers?

I am much at a loss whether it would not be the best policy to leave every colony to raise its own troops, to clothe them, to pay them, to furnish them with tents, and indeed with every thing but provisions, fuel, and forage. The project of abolishing provincial distinctions was introduced with a good intention, I believe, at first, but I think it will do no good upon the whole. However, if Congress is to manage the whole, I am in hopes they will get into a better train. They have established a war-office, and a board of war and ordnance, by means of which I hope they will get their affairs into better order.[1]

[1] Mr. Adams had been appointed by Congress, on the 13th of June, Chairman of this Board. From this date his correspondence with the military officers commences.

They will be better informed of the state of the army and of all its wants.

That the promotion of extraordinary merit may give disgust to those officers over whom the advancement is made, is true; but I think it ought not. That this power may be abused or misapplied, is also true. That interest, favor, private friendship, prejudice, may operate more or less in the purest assembly is true. But where will you lodge this power? To place it in the General would be more dangerous to the public liberty, and not less liable to abuse from sinister and unworthy motives. Will it do, is it consistent with common prudence, to lay it down as an invariable rule, that all officers, in all cases, shall rise in succession?

I am obliged to you for your caution, not to be too confident. The fate of war is uncertain; so are all sublunary things. But we must form our conjectures of effects from the knowledge we have of causes, and in circumstances like ours must not attempt to penetrate too far into futurity. There are as many evils, and more, which arise in human life from an excess of diffidence, as from an excess of confidence. Proud as mankind is, there is more superiority in this world yielded than assumed. I learned long ago from one of the greatest statesmen this world ever produced, Sully, neither to adventure upon rash attempts from too much confidence, nor to despair of success in a great design from the appearance of difficulties. Without attempting to judge of the future, which depends upon too many accidents, much less to subject it to our precipitation in bold and difficult enterprises, we should endeavor to subdue one obstacle at a time, nor suffer ourselves to be depressed by their greatness and their number. *We ought never to despair of what has been once accomplished.* How many things has the idea of impossible been annexed to, that have become easy to those who knew how to take advantage of time, opportunity, lucky moments, the faults of others, different dispositions, and an infinite number of other circumstances!

I will inclose to you a copy of the resolution establishing a board of war and ordnance. And, as you may well imagine we are all inexperienced in this business, I should be extremely obliged to you for any hints for the improvement of the plan, which may occur to you, and for any assistance or advice you

may give me as a private correspondent, in the execution of it. It is a great mortification to me, I confess, and I fear it will too often be a misfortune to our country, that I am called to the discharge of trusts to which I feel myself so unequal, and in the execution of which I can derive no assistance from my education or former course of life. But my country must command me, and wherever she shall order me, there I will go without dismay.

TO SAMUEL H. PARSONS.

Philadelphia, 22 June, 1776.

Your obliging favor of the 3d of June has been too long unanswered. I acknowledge the difficulty in ascertaining the comparative merit of officers, and the danger of advancing friends, where there is no uncommon merit. This danger cannot be avoided by any other means than making it an invariable rule to promote officers in succession. For if you make a King the judge of uncommon merit, he will advance favorites without merit, under color or pretence of merit. If you make a Minister of State the judge, he will naturally promote his relations, connections, and friends. If you place the power of judging of extraordinary merit in an Assembly, you do not mend the matter much. For, by all the experience I have had, I find that assemblies have favorites, as well as kings and ministers. The favorites of assemblies or the leading members, are not always the most worthy; I do not know whether they ever are. These leading members have sons, brothers, and cousins, acquaintances, friends, and connections of one sort or another, near or remote; and I have ever found these leading members of assemblies as much under the influence of nature, and her passions and prejudices, as kings and ministers. [The principal advantage and difference lies in this, that in an assembly there are more guards and checks upon the infirmities of leading members, than there are upon kings and ministers.]

What, then, shall we say? Shall we leave it to the General and the army? Is there not as much favoritism, as much of nature, passion, prejudice, and partiality in the army, as in an assembly? As much in a General, as a King or Minister?

Upon the whole, I believe it wisest to depart from the line of succession as seldom as possible. But I cannot but think that the power of departing from it at all, though liable to abuses everywhere, yet safest in the hands of an Assembly.

But, in our American army, as that is circumstanced, it is as difficult to settle a rule of succession as a criterion of merit. We have troops in every province, from Georgia to New Hampshire. A Colonel is killed in New Hampshire. The next Colonel in the American Army to him is in Georgia. Must we send the Colonel from Georgia to command the regiment in New Hampshire? Upon his journey he is seized with a fever and dies. The next Colonel is in Canada. We must then send to Canada for a Colonel to go to Portsmouth; and, as the next Colonel to him is in South Carolina, we must send a Colonel from South Carolina to Canada to command that regiment. These marches and counter-marches must run through all the corps of officers, and will occasion such inextricable perplexities, delays, and uncertainties, that we need not hesitate to pronounce it impracticable and ruinous. Shall we say, then, that succession shall take place among the officers of every distinct army, or in every distinct department?

My own private opinion is, that we shall never be quite right until every colony is permitted to raise its own troops, and the rule of succession is established among the officers of the colony. This, where there are troops of several colonies, serving in the same camp, may be liable to some inconveniences. But these will be fewer than upon any other plan you can adopt.

It is right, I believe, to make the rule of promotion among captains and subalterns regimental only; and that among field-officers more general. But the question is, how general it shall be. Shall it extend to the whole American army? or only to the whole district or department? or only to the army serving at a particular place?

That it is necessary to enlist an army to serve during the war, or at least for a longer period than one year, and to offer some handsome encouragement for that end, I have been convinced a long time.[1] I would make this temptation to consist partly in money and partly in land, and considerable in both.

[1] Compare with this sentiment the statement made by Mr. Hamilton. *Hamilton's Works*, vol. vii. p. 689.

It has been too long delayed, but I think it will now be soon done.

What is the reason that New York must continue to embarrass the continent? Must it be so forever? What is the cause of it? Have they no politicians capable of instructing and forming the sentiments of their people? Or are their people incapable of seeing and feeling like other men? One would think that their proximity to New England would assimilate their opinions and principles. One would think, too, that the army would have some influence upon them. But it seems to have none. New York is likely to have the honor of being the very last of all in imbibing the genuine principles and the true system of American policy. Perhaps she will never entertain them at all.

TO JOHN SULLIVAN.

Philadelphia, 23 June, 1776.

Your agreeable favor of May 4th has lain by me unanswered till now. The relation of your negotiations at New York in order to convince the people of the utility and necessity of instituting a new government, is very entertaining; and if you had remained there a few weeks longer, I conjecture you would have effected a change in the politics of that region.[1] Is it deceit or simple dulness in the people of that colony, which occasions their eccentric and retrograde politics?

Your late letter from Sorel gave us here many agreeable feelings. We had read nothing but the doleful, the dismal, and the horrible from Canada for a long time.

The surrender of the Cedars appears to have been a most infamous piece of cowardice. The officer,[2] if he has nothing to say for himself more than I can think of, deserves the most infamous death. It is the first stain upon American arms. May immortal disgrace attend his name and character! I wish, however, that he alone had been worthy of blame. We have

[1] The greater part of the letter referred to is printed anonymously in Gordon's *History*, vol. ii. p. 269. It is a curious specimen of the political manœuvring of that day.

[2] Major Butterfield.

thrown away Canada in a most scandalous manner. Pray did not opening the trade to the upper country, and letting loose the tories, bring upon us so many disasters? For God's sake explain to me the causes of our miscarriages in that province. Let us know the truth, which has too long been hidden from us. All the military affairs in that province have been in great confusion, and we have never had any proper returns or regular information from thence. There is now a corps of officers who will certainly act with more system and more precision, and more spirit. Pray make us acquainted with every thing that is wanted, whether men, money, arms, ammunition, clothing, tents, barracks, forage, medicines, or whatever else. Keep us constantly informed; give us line upon line.

I fear there is a chain of toryism extending from Canada through New York and New Jersey into Pennsylvania, which conducts misrepresentation and false information, and makes impression here upon credulous, unsuspecting, ignorant whigs. I wish it may not have for its object treasons and conspiracies of a deeper die.

There is a young gentleman bred at college and the bar, an excellent soldier, a good scholar, and a virtuous man, in your brigade, who deserves a station far above that in which he stands, that of adjutant to Colonel Greaton's regiment. Any notice you may take of him will be gratefully acknowledged by me as well as him.[1] Pray let me know the state of the small-pox, an enemy which we have more cause to fear than any other. Is it among our troops? Is it among the Canadians? I mean the inhabitants of the country. Can no effectual means be used to annihilate the infection? Cannot it be kept out of the army? The New England militia will be of no use, if they come in ever so great numbers, if that distemper is to seize them as soon as they arrive.

[1] Nathan Rice, who had been a student in the office of Mr. Adams at the breaking out of the revolution, and left it to join the army, in which he served with credit and distinction.

TO JOHN WINTHROP.

Philadelphia, 23 June, 1776.

Your favor of June 1st is before me. It is now universally acknowledged that we are and must be independent. But still, objections are made to a declaration of it. It is said that such a declaration will arouse and unite Great Britain. But are they not already aroused and united, as much as they will be? Will not such a declaration arouse and unite the friends of liberty, the few who are left, in opposition to the present system? It is also said that such a declaration will put us in the power of foreign States; that France will take advantage of us when they see we cannot recede, and demand severe terms of us; that she, and Spain too, will rejoice to see Britain and America wasting each other. But this reasoning has no weight with me, because I am not for soliciting any political connection, or military assistance, or indeed naval, from France. I wish for nothing but commerce, a mere marine treaty with them.[1] And this they will never grant until we make the declaration, and this, I think, they cannot refuse, after we have made it.

The advantages which will result from such a declaration, are, in my opinion, very numerous and very great. After that event the colonies will hesitate no longer to complete their governments. They will establish tests, and ascertain the criminality of toryism. The presses will produce no more seditious or traitorous speculations. Slanders upon public men and measures will be lessened. The legislatures of the colonies will exert themselves to manufacture saltpetre, sulphur, powder, arms, cannon, mortars, clothing, and every thing necessary for the support of life. Our civil governments will feel a vigor hitherto unknown. Our military operations by sea and land will be conducted with greater spirit. Privateers will swarm in vast numbers. Foreigners will then exert themselves to supply us with what we want. A foreign court will not disdain to

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 488, 489, 503, 504. In a brief but very valuable essay, entitled, *The Diplomacy of the Revolution*, published at New York in 1852, Mr. W. H. Trescott points out with great clearness the origin of the neutral policy of the United States. The language of this letter is only further corroborative of the correctness of the statement in the autobiography, very properly noticed by him as written at a much later period. See that volume, p. 21, note.

treat with us upon equal terms. Nay farther, in my opinion, such a declaration, instead of uniting the people of Great Britain against us, will raise such a storm against the measures of administration as will obstruct the war, and throw the kingdom into confusion.

A committee is appointed to prepare a confederation of the colonies, ascertaining the terms and ends of the compact, and the limits of the Continental Constitution; and another committee is appointed to draw up a declaration that these colonies are free and independent States. And other committees are appointed for other purposes, as important. These committees will report in a week or two, and then the last finishing strokes will be given to the politics of this revolution. Nothing after that will remain but war. I think I may then petition my constituents for leave to return to my family, and leave the war to be conducted by some others who understand it better. I am weary, thoroughly weary, and ought to have a little rest.

I am grieved to hear, as I do from various quarters, of that rage for innovation, which appears in so many wild shapes in our province. Are not these ridiculous projects prompted, excited, and encouraged by disaffected persons, in order to divide, dissipate, and distract the attention of the people at a time when every thought should be employed, and every sinew exerted for the defence of the country? Many of the projects that I heard of are not repairing the building that is on fire. They are pulling the building down, instead of laboring to extinguish the flames. The projects of county assemblies, town registers, and town probates of wills, are founded in narrow, contracted notions, sordid stinginess, and profound ignorance, and tend directly to barbarism. I care not whom I offend by this language. I blush to see such stuff in our public papers, which used to breathe a spirit much more liberal.

I rejoice to see in the lists of both Houses so many names respectable for parts and learning. I hope their fortitude and zeal will be in proportion, and then I am sure their country will have great cause to bless them.

TO WILLIAM TUDOR.

Philadelphia, 24 June, 1776.

Your favor of May 4th has lain by me till this time unanswered, and I have heard nothing from you since. I have entertained hopes of seeing you here before now, as I heard you intended such an excursion. I was much obliged to you for your particular account of Major Austin and Mr. Rice; the first I find has the command at Castle William. The last is gone to Canada, where, if he lives through the dangers of famine, pestilence, and the sword, I hope General Gates will promote him. I have written to the General concerning him, recommending him to the General's notice and favor in as strong and warm terms as I ever used in recommending any one. Rice has got possession of my heart by his prudent and faithful attention to the service.

What is the reason that New York is still asleep or dead in politics and war? Must it be always so? Cannot the whole congregation of patriots and heroes belonging to the army, now in that province, inspire it with one generous sentiment? Have they no sense, no feeling, no sentiment, no passions? While every other colony is rapidly advancing, their motions seem to be rather retrograde. The timid and trimming politics of some men of large property here have almost done their business for them. They have lost their influence, and grown obnoxious. The quakers and proprietarians together have little weight. New Jersey shows a noble ardor. Is there any thing in the air or soil of New York unfriendly to the spirit of liberty? Are the people destitute of reason or of virtue? Or what is the cause?

I agree with you in your hopes that the Massachusetts will proceed to complete her government. You wish me to be there, but I cannot. Mr. Bowdoin or Dr. Winthrop, I hope, will be chosen governor. When a few mighty matters are accomplished here, I retreat, like Cincinnatus, to my plough, and, like Sir William Temple, to my garden, and farewell politics. I am wearied to death; some of you younger folk must take your trick, and let me go to sleep. My children will scarcely thank me for neglecting their education and interest

so long. They will be worse off than ordinary beggars, because I shall teach them as a first principle not to beg. Pride and want, though they may be accompanied with liberty, or at least may live under a free Constitution, are not a very pleasant mixture nor a very desirable legacy, yet this is all that I shall leave them. Pray write me as often as you can.

It is reported here that Colonel Reed is intended for the Governor of New Jersey. I wish with all my heart he may. That province is a spirited, a brave, and patriotic people. They want nothing but a man of sense and principle at their head. Such a one is Reed. His only fault is that he has not quite fire enough. But this may be an advantage to him as governor. His coolness, and candor, and goodness of heart, with his abilities, will make that people very happy.

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Philadelphia, 24 June, 1776.

I received your obliging favor of the 21st this morning, and I thank you for it. Do not be angry with me.[1] I hope I shall atone for past sins of omission soon.

The express, which you mention, brought me such contradictory accounts that I did not think it worth while to write to you upon it. In general, Sullivan writes that he was intrenching at the Sorel; that the Canadians expressed a great deal of joy at his appearance; that they assisted him with teams and with wheat; that he had ordered General Thompson with two thousand men to attack the enemy, consisting of about two hundred, according to his intelligence, at the Three Rivers, where they were fortifying, and from the character of Thompson and the goodness of his troops, he had much confidence of his suc-

[1] "I am almost resolved not to inform you, that a general dissatisfaction prevails here with our Convention. Read the papers, and be assured Frederick speaks the sense of many counties. I have not been idle. I have appealed *in writing* to the people. County after county is instructing.

"Remember me to Mrs. Adams, and all independent souls. Shall I send you my circular letter? Adieu.

"Your friend,

"S. CHASE."

cess; that he hoped to drive away the enemy's ships, which had passed the rapids of Richelieu. This narration of Sullivan's was animating. But a letter from Arnold of the same date, or the next day rather, was wholly in the dismals.

Gates is gone to Canada, and we have done every thing that you recommended, and more, to support him. But for my own part, I confess my mind is impressed with other objects, the neglect of which appears to me to have been the source of all our misfortunes in Canada and everywhere else. Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. A declaration of independence, confederation, and foreign alliances, in season, would have put a stop to that embarrassing opposition in Congress, which has occasioned us to do the work of the Lord deceitfully in Canada and elsewhere.

A resolution of your Convention was read in Congress this morning,[1] and the question was put whether your delegates should have leave to go home, and whether those great questions should be postponed beyond the 1st of July. The determination was in the negative. We should have been happy to have obliged your Convention and your delegates. But it is now become public in the colonies that those questions are to be brought on the 1st of July. The lower counties have instructed their members, as the Assembly of Pennsylvania have. Jersey has chosen five new members, all independent souls, and instructed them to vote on the 1st of July for independence.

There is a conference of committees from every county in Pennsylvania now sitting in this city, who yesterday voted that the delegates for this colony ought on the 1st of July to vote for independence. This vote was not only unanimous, but I am told by one of them, that all the members declared *seriatim* that this was their opinion, and the opinion of the several counties and towns they represented, and many of them produced instructions from their constituents to vote for that measure. You see, therefore, that there is such a universal expectation that the great question will be decided the 1st of July, and it has been already so often postponed, that to postpone it again would hazard convulsions and dangerous conspiracies. It must then come on and be decided. I hope that before Monday

[1] This resolution is found in the *American Archives*, 4th series, vol. vi. c. 1845. But no trace of it is to be seen in the Journal of Congress for this day.

morning next we shall receive from Maryland instructions to do right.

Pray send me your circular letter, and believe me, &c.

TO ARCHIBALD BULLOCK.

Philadelphia, 1 July, 1776.

Two days ago I received your favor of May 1st. I was greatly disappointed, Sir, in the information you gave me, that you should be prevented from revisiting Philadelphia. I had flattered myself with hopes of your joining us soon, and not only affording us the additional strength of your abilities and fortitude, but enjoying the satisfaction of seeing a temper and conduct here somewhat more agreeable to your wishes than those which prevailed when you were here before. But I have since been informed that your countrymen have done themselves the justice to place you at the head of their affairs, a station in which you may perhaps render more essential service to them and to America than you could here.

There seems to have been a great change in the sentiments of the colonies since you left us, and I hope that a few months will bring us all to the same way of thinking.

This morning is assigned for the greatest debate of all. A declaration, that these colonies are free and independent States, has been reported by a committee appointed some weeks ago for that purpose, and this day or to-morrow is to determine its fate. May Heaven prosper the new-born republic, and make it more glorious than any former republics have been!

The smallpox has ruined the American army in Canada, and of consequence the American cause. A series of disasters has happened there, partly owing, I fear, to the indecision of Philadelphia, and partly to the mistakes or misconduct of our officers in that department. But the smallpox, which infected every man we sent there, completed our ruin, and has compelled us to evacuate that important province. We must, however, regain it sometime or other.

My countrymen have been more successful at sea in driving

all the men-of-war completely out of Boston harbor, and in making prizes of a great number of transports and other vessels.

We are in daily expectation of an armament before New York, where, if it comes, the conflict must be bloody. The object is great which we have in view, and we must expect a great expense of blood to attain it. But we should always remember that a free constitution of civil government cannot be purchased at too dear a rate, as there is nothing on this side of the new Jerusalem of equal importance to mankind.

It is a cruel reflection, that a little more wisdom, a little more activity, or a little more integrity would have preserved us Canada, and enabled us to support this trying conflict at less expense of men and money. But irretrievable miscarriages ought to be lamented no further than to enable and stimulate us to do better in future.

Your colleagues, Hall and Gwinnet, are here in good health and spirits, and as firm as you yourself could wish them. Present my compliments to Mr. Houston. Tell him the colonies will have republics for their government, let us lawyers and your divine[1] say what we will.

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Philadelphia, 1 July, 1776.

Your favor by the post this morning, gave me much pleasure,[2] but the generous and unanimous vote of your Convention gave me much more. It was brought into Congress this morning, just as we were entering on the great debate. That debate took up the most of the day, but it was an idle mispence of time, for nothing was said but what had been repeated and hackneyed in that room before, a hundred times, for six months past. In the committee of the whole, the question was carried in the affirmative, and reported to the house. A colony desired it to be postponed until to-morrow. Then it will pass by a

[1] Dr. Zubly.

[2] An exact imitation of this letter is inserted in vol. iv. of this work, p. 56.

great majority; perhaps with almost unanimity. Yet I cannot promise this. Because one or two gentlemen may possibly be found, who will vote point-blank against the known and declared sense of their constituents. Maryland, however, I have the pleasure to inform you, behaved well. Paca, generously and nobly.

Alas, Canada! we have found misfortune and disgrace in that quarter. Evacuated at last. Transports arrived at Sandy Hook, from whence we may expect an attack in a short time upon New York or New Jersey, and our army not so strong as we could wish. The militia of New Jersey and New England not so ready as they ought to be.

The Romans made it a fixed rule never to send or receive ambassadors to treat of peace with their enemies, while their affairs were in an adverse and disastrous situation. There was a generosity and magnanimity in this, becoming freemen. It flowed from that temper and those principles, which alone can preserve the freedom of a people. It is a pleasure to find our Americans of the same temper. It is a good symptom, foreboding a good end.

If you imagine that I expect this declaration will ward off calamities from this country, you are much mistaken. A bloody conflict we are destined to endure. This has been my opinion from the beginning. You will certainly remember my declared opinion was, at the first Congress, when we found that we could not agree upon an immediate non-exportation, that the contest would not be settled without bloodshed; and that if hostilities should once commence, they would terminate in an incurable animosity between the two countries. Every political event since the nineteenth of April, 1775, has confirmed me in this opinion. If you imagine that I flatter myself with happiness and halcyon days after a separation from Great Britain, you are mistaken again. I do not expect that our new government will be so quiet as I could wish, nor that happy harmony, confidence, and affection between the colonies, that every good American ought to study, labor, and pray for, for a long time.

But, freedom is a counterbalance for poverty, discord, and war, and more. It is your hard lot and mine to be called into life at such a time. Yet, even these times have their pleasures.

TO MRS. ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 3 July, 1776.

Your favor[1] of 17th June, dated at Plymouth, was handed me by yesterday's post. I was much pleased to find that you had taken a journey to Plymouth, to see your friends, in the long absence of one whom you may wish to see. The excursion will be an amusement, and will serve your health. How happy would it have made me to have taken this journey with you!

I was informed, a day or two before the receipt of your letter, that you was gone to Plymouth, by Mrs. Polly Palmer, who was obliging enough, in your absence, to send me the particulars of the expedition to the lower harbor against the men-of-war. Her narration is executed with a precision and perspicuity which would have become the pen of an accomplished historian.

I am very glad you had so good an opportunity of seeing one of our little American men-of-war. Many ideas new to you must have presented themselves in such a scene; and you will in future better understand the relations of sea engagements.

I rejoice extremely at Dr. Bulfinch's petition to open a hospital. But I hope the business will be done upon a larger scale. I hope that one hospital will be licensed in every county, if not in every town. I am happy to find you resolved to be with the children in the first class. Mr. Whitney and Mrs. Katy Quincy are cleverly through inoculation in this city.

The information you give me, of our friend's refusing his appointment,[2] has given me much pain, grief, and anxiety. I believe I shall be obliged to follow his example. I have not fortune enough to support my family, and, what is of more importance, to support the dignity of that exalted station.[3] It is too high and lifted up for me, who delight in nothing so much as retreat, solitude, silence, and obscurity. In private life, no one has a right to censure me for following my own inclinations in retirement, simplicity, and frugality. In public

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams, vol. i. p. 102.
[2] James Warren had been appointed a Judge of the Superior Court.
[3] That of Chief Justice.

life, every man has a right to remark as he pleases. At least he thinks so.

Yesterday, the greatest question was decided, which ever was debated in America, and a greater, perhaps, never was nor will be decided among men. A resolution was passed without one dissenting colony, "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, and as such they have, and of right ought to have, full power to make war, conclude peace, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which other States may rightfully do." You will see in a few days a Declaration setting forth the causes which have impelled us to this mighty revolution, and the reasons which will justify it in the sight of God and man. A plan of confederation will be taken up in a few days.

When I look back to the year 1761, and recollect the argument concerning writs of assistance in the superior court, which I have hitherto considered as the commencement of this controversy between Great Britain and America, and run through the whole period, from that time to this, and recollect the series of political events, the chain of causes and effects, I am surprised at the suddenness as well as greatness of this revolution. Britain has been filled with folly, and America with wisdom. At least, this is my judgment. Time must determine. It is the will of Heaven that the two countries should be sundered forever. It may be the will of Heaven that America shall suffer calamities still more wasting, and distresses yet more dreadful. If this is to be the case, it will have this good effect at least. It will inspire us with many virtues, which we have not, and correct many errors, follies and vices which threaten to disturb, dishonor, and destroy us. The furnace of affliction produces refinement, in States as well as individuals. And the new governments we are assuming in every part will require a purification from our vices, and an augmentation of our virtues, or they will be no blessings. The people will have unbounded power, and the people are extremely addicted to corruption and venality, as well as the great. But I must submit all my hopes and fears to an overruling Providence, in which, unfashionable as the faith may be, I firmly believe.

3 July.

Had a Declaration of Independency been made seven months ago, it would have been attended with many great and glorious effects. We might, before this hour, have formed alliances with foreign States. We should have mastered Quebec, and been in possession of Canada. You will perhaps wonder how such a declaration would have influenced our affairs in Canada, but if I could write with freedom, I could easily convince you that it would, and explain to you the manner how. Many gentlemen in high stations and of great influence have been duped by the ministerial bubble of commissioners to treat. And in real, sincere expectation of this event, which they so fondly wished, they have been slow and languid in promoting measures for the reduction of that province. Others there are in the colonies who really wished that our enterprise in Canada would be defeated, that the colonies might be brought into danger and distress between two fires, and be thus induced to submit. Others really wished to defeat the expedition to Canada, lest the conquest of it should elevate the minds of the people too much to hearken to those terms of reconciliation, which, they believed, would be offered us. These jarring views, wishes, and designs, occasioned an opposition to many salutary measures, which were proposed for the support of that expedition, and caused obstructions, embarrassments, and studied delays, which have finally lost us the province.

All these causes, however, in conjunction, would not have disappointed us, if it had not been for a misfortune which could not be foreseen, and, perhaps, could not have been prevented — I mean the prevalence of the smallpox among our troops. This fatal pestilence completed our destruction. It is a frown of providence upon us, which we ought to lay to heart.

But, on the other hand, the delay of this declaration to this time has many great advantages attending it. The hopes of reconciliation, which were fondly entertained by multitudes of honest and well-meaning, though weak and mistaken people, have been gradually and, at last, totally extinguished. Time has been given for the whole people maturely to consider the great question of independence, and to ripen their judgment, dissipate their fears, and allure their hopes, by discussing it in

newspapers and pamphlets, by debating it in assemblies, conventions, committees of safety and inspection, in town and county meetings, as well as in private conversations, so that the whole people, in every colony of the thirteen, have now adopted it as their own act. This will cement the union, and avoid those heats, and perhaps convulsions, which might have been occasioned by such a declaration six months ago.

But the day is past. The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore.

You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure, that it will cost us to maintain this declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet, through all the gloom, I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means, and that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even although we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not.

TO SAMUEL CHASE.

Philadelphia, 9 July, 1776.

Yours of the 5th came to me the 8th. You will see by this post, that the river is passed, and the bridge cut away. The Declaration was yesterday published and proclaimed from that awful stage in the State-house yard; by whom, do you think? By the Committee of Safety, the Committee of Inspection, and a great crowd of people. Three cheers rended the welkin. The battalions paraded on the Common, and gave us the *feu de joie*, notwithstanding the scarcity of powder. The bells rang all day and almost all night. Even the chimers chimed away. The

election for the city was carried on, amidst all this lurry, with the utmost decency and order. Who are chosen, I cannot say; but the list was Franklin, Rittenhouse, Owen Biddle, Cannon, Schlosser, Matlack, and Kuhl. Thus you see the effect of men of fortune acting against the sense of the people!

As soon as an American seal is prepared, I conjecture the Declaration will be subscribed by all the members, which will give you the opportunity you wish for, of transmitting your name among the votaries of independence.[1]

I agree with you that we never can again be happy under a single particle of British power. Indeed, this sentiment is very universal. The arms are taken down from every public place.

The army is at Crown Point. We have sent up a great number of shipwrights to make a respectable fleet upon the lakes.

We have taken every measure to defend New York. The militia are marching this day in a great body from Pennsylvania. That of Jersey has behaved well, turned out universally. That of Connecticut, I was told last night by Mr. Huntington, was coming in the full number demanded of them, and must be there before now. We shall make it do, this year, and if we can stop the torrent for this campaign, it is as much as we deserve, for our weakness and sloth in politics the last. Next year we shall do better. New governments will bring new men into the play, I perceive; men of more mettle.

Your motion last fall for sending ambassadors to France with conditional instructions, was murdered; terminating in a committee of secret correspondence, which came to nothing.

Thank you for the paper and resolves. You are atoning for all past imperfections by your vigor, spirit, and unanimity.

Send along your militia for the flying camp; do not let them hesitate about their harvest. They must defend the field before they can eat the fruit. I shall inclose to you Dr. Price.[2] He is an independent, I think.

My compliments to Mr. Johnson, Mr. Carroll, and all your friends whom I have the honor to know.

[1] "I hope ere this time the decisive blow is struck. Oppression, inhumanity, and perfidy have compelled us to it. Blessed be men who effect the work! I envy you. How shall I transmit to posterity that I gave my assent?" *Mr. C.'s letter.*

[2] *Observations on Civil Liberty*, for which Mr. Chase had written.

TO JOSEPH WARD.

Philadelphia, 10 July, 1776.

Yours of 1st July came duly to hand. The establishment of the war-office, as you observe, has given me work enough; more than I have a relish for, and of a kind not very suitable to my taste; but I must acquiesce. Should be greatly obliged to any officer of the army for a hint of any improvement in the plan, and for any assistance in the execution of it.

The continual reports of our disasters in Canada have not intimidated the Congress. On the contrary, in the midst of them, more decisive steps have been taken than ever, as you must have seen, or will see before this reaches you. The Romans never would send or receive an ambassador to treat of peace, when their affairs were in an adverse situation. This generous temper is imitated by the Americans.

You hear there is not candor and harmony between some of the members of this body. I wish you would mention the names and particulars of the report. The names, I mean, of the members between whom it is reported there is not candor and harmony. The report is groundless. There is as much candor and harmony between the members as generally takes place in assemblies, and much more than could naturally be expected in such an assembly as this. But there is a prospect now of greater harmony than ever. The principal object of dispute is now annihilated, and several members are left out.

In making a return of your division of the army, pray give us the name and rank of every officer. We want to make an army list for publication.

TO JONATHAN MASON.

Philadelphia, 18 July, 1776.

Your agreeable letter from Boston the 7th July was handed me on Tuesday last by the post.

The confusions in America, inseparable from so great a revolution in affairs, are sufficient to excite anxieties in the minds of

young gentlemen just stepping into life. Your concern for the event of these commotions is not to your dishonor. But let it not affect your mind too much. These clouds will be dispersed, and the sky will become more serene.

I cannot advise you to quit the retired scene of which you have hitherto appeared to be so fond, and engage in the noisy business of war. I doubt not you have honor and spirit and abilities sufficient to make a figure in the field; and if the future circumstances of your country should make it necessary, I hope you would not hesitate to buckle on your armor. But at present I see no necessity for it. Accomplishments of the civil and political kind are no less necessary for the happiness of mankind than martial ones. We cannot all be soldiers; and there will probably be in a very few years a greater scarcity of lawyers and statesmen than of warriors.

The circumstances of this country from the years 1755 to 1758, during which period I was a student in Mr. Putnam's office, were almost as confused as they are now, and the prospect before me, my young friend, was much more gloomy than yours.[1] I felt an inclination, exactly similar to yours, for engaging in active martial life, but I was advised, and, upon a consideration of all circumstances, concluded, to mind my books. Whether my determination was prudent or not, it is not possible to say, but I never repented it. To attain the real knowledge which is necessary for a lawyer, requires the whole time and thoughts of a man in his youth, and it will do him no good to dissipate his mind among the confused objects of a camp. *Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ*, must be your motto.

I wish you had told me particularly what lawyers have opened offices in Boston, and what progress is made in the practice, and in the courts of justice. I cannot undertake to advise you, whether you had better go into an office in Boston or not. I rather think that the practice at present is too inconsiderable to be of much service to you. You will be likely to be obliged to waste much of your time in running of errands, and doing trifling drudgery, without learning much. Depend upon it, it is of more importance that you read much than that you draw many writs. The common writs upon notes, bonds, and ac-

[1] Mr. Mason had been entered as a student in Mr. Adams's office.

counts, are mastered in half an hour. Common declarations for rent, and ejectment, and trespass, both of assault and battery and *quare clausum fregit*, are learned in very nearly as short a time. The more difficult special declarations, and especially the refinements of special pleadings, are never learned in an office. They are the result of experience and long habits of thinking. If you read Plowden's Commentaries, you will see the nature of special pleadings. In addition to these, read *Instructor Clericalis*, Mallory, Lilly, and look into Rastall and Coke. Your time will be better spent upon these authors than in dancing attendance upon a lawyer's office and his clients. Many of our most respectable lawyers never did this at all. Gridley, Pratt, Thacher, Sewall, Paine, never served regularly in any office.

Upon the whole, my young friend, I wish that the state of public affairs would have admitted of my spending more time with you. I had no greater pleasure in this life than in assisting young minds possessed of ambition to excel, which I very well know to be your case. Let me entreat you not to be too anxious about futurity. Mind your books. Sit down patiently to Plowden's Commentaries; read them through coolly, deliberately, and attentively; read them in course; endeavor to make yourself master of the point on which the case turns; remark the reasoning and the decision; and tell me a year hence whether your time has not been more agreeably and profitably spent than in drawing writs and running of errands. I hope to see you ere long. I am obliged to you for this letter, and wish a continuance of your correspondence. I am anxious, very anxious, for my dear Mrs. Adams and my babes. God preserve them. I can do them no kind office whatever.

TO J. D. SERGEANT.

Philadelphia, 21 July, 1776.

Your favor of the 19th, from Trenton, reached me yesterday. It is very true that we were somewhat alarmed at the last clause in your constitution. It is a pity that the idea of returning

under the yoke was held up in so good a system, because it gives something to say to a very unworthy party.[1]

I hope you will assume the style of the *Commonwealth of New Jersey*, as soon as your new government is completed. Virginia has done it, and it is the most consistent style.[2]

It is a great pleasure to learn that you have formally ratified independency, and that your unanimity and firmness increase. This will be the case everywhere, as the war approaches nearer. An enemy's army brings a great heat with it, and warms all before it. Nothing makes and spreads patriotism so fast. Your ordinance against treasons will make whigs by the thousand.[3] Nine tenths of the toryism in America has arisen from sheer cowardice and avarice. But when persons come to see there is greater danger to their persons and property from toryism than whiggism, the same avarice and pusillanimity will make them whigs. A treason law is in politics like the article for shooting upon the spot a soldier who shall turn his back. It turns a man's cowardice and timidity into heroism, because it places greater danger behind his back than before his face.

While you are attending to military matters, do not forget saltpetre, sulphur, powder, flints, lead, cannon, mortars.

It grieves me to hear that your people have a prejudice against liberal education.[4] There is a spice of this everywhere. But liberty has no enemy more dangerous than such a prejudice. It is your business, my friend, as a statesman, to soften and eradicate this prejudice. The surest mode of doing it is to

[1] "I am told you are alarmed at Philadelphia with the last clause in our charter. That, and another respecting judges, was hard fought; especially that of reconciliation, upon a motion to defer printing the copy till it could be considered." *Mr. S.'s letter.*

[2] "However, we have formally ratified *Independency*, and assumed the style of the *Convention of the State of New Jersey*. This, very unanimously, and the votes go down by this express to the printer." *Mr. S.'s letter.*

[3] "We are mending very fast here. East Jersey was always firm. West Jersey will now move with vigor. The tories in some parts disturbed us, but they have hurt us more by impeding the business of the Convention, and harassing with an infinity of hearings. But for this we have provided a remedy by an ordinance for trying treasons, seditions, and counterfeitings." *Mr. S.'s letter.*

[4] "We want wisdom here. Raw, young, and inexperienced as your humble servant is, I am really forced to bear a principal part. Would to Heaven that I could look round here, as when with you, and see a number in whose understanding I could confide. But we have a miserable prejudice against men of education in this State; plain men are generally returned, of sufficient honesty and spirit, but most of them hardly competent to the penning of a common vote." *Mr. S.'s letter.*

persuade gentlemen of education to lay aside some of their airs of scorn, vanity, and pride, in which it is a certain truth that they sometimes indulge themselves. Gentlemen cannot expect the confidence of the common people, if they treat them ill, or refuse haughtily to comply with some of their favorite notions, which may be most obligingly done, without the least deviation from honor or virtue. Your delegates behave very well; but I wish for you among them. I think, however, that you judged wisely in continuing in Convention, where I believe you have been able to do more good than you could have done here.

I should be obliged to you for a line now and then. Mr. S. Adams received your letter from Bristol. You will see the new delegates for Pennsylvania. What is the cause that Mr. Dickinson never can maintain his popularity for more than two or three years together, as they tell me has ever been the case? He may have a good heart, and certainly is very ready with his pen, and has a great deal of learning, but his head is not very long nor clear.

TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Philadelphia, 25 July, 1776.

Sir, — I find myself under a necessity of applying to the honorable General Court for leave to return home. I have attended here so long and so constantly that I feel myself necessitated to ask this favor, on account of my health as well as on many other accounts.

I beg leave to propose to the honorable the General Court an alteration in their plan of delegation in Congress, which, it appears to me, would be more agreeable to the health and convenience of the members, and much more conducive to the public good than the present. No gentleman can possibly attend to an incessant round of thinking, speaking, and writing upon the most intricate as well as important concerns of human society, from one end of the year to another, without injury to his mental and bodily health. I would, therefore, humbly propose that the honorable Court would be pleased to appoint nine members to attend in Congress, three or five at a time. In this case, six

or four might be at home at a time, and every member might be relieved once in three or four months. In this way you would always have members in Congress who would have in their minds a complete chain of the proceedings here, as well as in the General Court, both kinds of which knowledge are necessary for a proper conduct here. In this way the lives and health, and, indeed, the sound minds of the delegates here would be in less danger than they are at present, and in my humble opinion, the public business would be much better done.

This proposal, however, is only submitted to the consideration of that body whose sole right it is to judge of it. For myself, I must entreat the General Court to give me leave to resign, and immediately to appoint some other gentleman in my room. The consideration of my own health and the circumstances of my family and private affairs would have little weight with me, if the sacrifice of these was necessary for the public; but it is not. Because those parts of the business of Congress for which, if for any, I have any qualifications, being now nearly completed, and the business that remains being chiefly military and commercial, of which I know very little, there are multitudes of gentlemen in the province much fitter for the public service here than I am.

With great respect to the General Court, &c.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 27 July, 1776.

I have directed a packet to you by this day's post, and shall only add a few words by Fessenden. I assure you the necessity of your sending along fresh delegates here is not chimerical. Mr. Paine has been very ill for this whole week, and remains in a bad way. He has not been able to attend Congress for several days, and if I was to judge by his eye, his skin, and his cough, I should conclude he never would be fit to do duty there again, without a long intermission, and a course of air, exercise, diet, and medicine. In this I may be

mistaken. Mr. S. Adams, between you and me, is completely worn out. I wish he had gone home six months ago, and rested himself. Then he might have done it without any disadvantage. But, in plain English, he has been so long here, and his strength, spirits, and abilities so exhausted, that a hundred such delegates here would not be worth a groat. My case is worse. My face is grown pale, my eyes weak and inflamed again, my nerves tremulous, and my mind weak as water. Night sweats and feverous heats by day are returned upon me, which is an infallible symptom with me that it is time to throw off all care for a time, and take my rest. I have several times, with the blessing of God, saved my life in this way, and am now determined to attempt it once more.

You must be very speedy in appointing other delegates, or you will not be represented here. Go home I will, if I leave the Massachusetts without a member here. You know my resolutions in these matters are as fixed as fate; or if you do not know it, I do. I know better than anybody what my constitution will bear, and what it will not, and, you may depend upon it, I have already tempted it beyond prudence and safety. A few months' rest and relaxation will recruit me, but this is absolutely necessary for that end. I have written a resignation to the General Court, and am determined to take six months' rest at least. I wish to be released from Philadelphia forever, but in case the General Court should wish otherwise, which I hope they will not, I do not mean surlily to refuse to serve them. If you appoint such a number that we can have a respite once in six months at least, or once in three, if that is more convenient, I should be willing to take another trick or two. But I will never again undertake upon any other terms, unless I should undertake for a year, and bring my wife and four children with me, as many other gentlemen here have done. Which, as I know it would be infinitely more agreeable, and for the benefit of my children, so in my sincere opinion it would be cheaper for the province; because I am sure I could bring my whole family here and maintain it cheaper than I can live here single at board with a servant and two horses.

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Philadelphia, 16 August, 1776.

Your obliging favor of July 28th I duly received. I am glad to hear that your third freshmanship is a busy one. I think you commence a fourth, at Philadelphia, very soon. I have presumed to lay before the General Court a proposal to choose nine delegates, that their duty may be discharged here in rotation. The service here is too hard for any one to be continued so long, at least for me. Who will be thought of, I know not. I wish they may be characters respectable in every point of view. Mr. Bowdoin, Dr. Winthrop, Major Hawley, General Warren, Dana, Lowell, Sewall, Sullivan, Sargeant, present themselves, with many others, and cannot leave the Court at a loss.

You inform me that the House have taken up the subject of government, and appointed a committee to prepare a form. And although they have not joined the Board in this important business, yet I hope they will prepare a plan which the Board will approve. I fear I was mistaken, when, in my last to you, I foretold that every colony would have more than one branch to its legislature. The Convention of Pennsylvania has voted for a single Assembly. Such is the force of habit; and what surprises me not a little is, that the American philosopher[1] should have so far accommodated himself to the customs of his countrymen as to be a zealous advocate for it. No country ever will be long happy, or ever entirely safe and free, which is thus governed. The curse of a *jus vagum* will be their portion.

I wish with you that the genius of this country may expand itself, now the shackles are knocked off, which have heretofore confined it. But there is not a little danger of its becoming still more contracted. If a sufficient scope is not allowed for the human mind to exert itself, if genius and learning are not sufficiently encouraged, instead of improving by this revolution, we shall become more despicably narrow, timid, selfish, base, and barbarous.

The little pamphlet you mention was printed by Colonel Lee, who insisted upon it so much that it could not be decently

[1] Franklin.

refused. Instead of wondering that it was not enlarged, the wonder ought to be that it was ever written.[1] It is a poor scrap. The negative given in it to the first magistrate will be adopted nowhere but in South Carolina. Virginia has done very well. I hope the next sister will do equally. I hope the Massachusetts will call their government a commonwealth. Let us take the name manfully, and let the first executive magistrate be the head of the Council Board, and no more. Our people will never submit to more, and I am not clear that it is best they should. The "Thoughts on Government" were calculated for southern latitudes, not northern. But if the House should establish a single Assembly as a legislature, I confess it would grieve me to the very soul; and however others may be, I shall certainly never be happy under such a government. However, the right of the people to establish such a government as they please, will ever be defended by me, whether they choose wisely or foolishly.

Mr. Wrixon has found hard luck in America as well as in Europe. I have never seen nor heard of any reason to doubt the sincerity of his professions of regard to our country. But he is about returning. I am sorry that he has just cause to return. The Baron[2] is dead; has not left a very good character.

There is one particular, my friend, in which our province uses her delegates here very unkindly, and by the same means injures herself and all the United States. I mean in not sending us your journals. To this moment, I do not know one step that has been taken to raise the troops for New York and Ticonderoga. Nor the name of one officer, nor when they marched. The interest and reputation of our province suffer beyond measure by such a confused way of doing business. We ought to be minutely informed of the characters and connections of all the officers you send into the service, as well as of their names. You ought to rank and number the Massachusetts regiments, and publish a list of all the officers' names.

[1] Thoughts on Government. [2] Woedtke.

TO SAMUEL H. PARSONS.

Philadelphia, 19 August, 1776.

Your favors of the 13th and 15th are before me. The gentlemen you recommend for Majors, Chapman and Dyer, will be recommended by the Board of War, and I hope agreed to in Congress.

I thank you for your observations upon certain field-officers. Patterson, Shepard, and Brooks, make the best figure, I think, upon paper. It is my misfortune that I have not the least acquaintance with any of these gentlemen, having never seen any one of them, or heard his name till lately. This is a little remarkable. Few persons in the province ever travelled over the whole of it more than I have, or had better opportunities to know every conspicuous character. But I do not so much as know from what parts of the province Shepard and Brooks come, of what families they are, their education or employments. Should be very glad to be informed.

Lieutenant-Colonel Henshaw has been recommended to me by Colonel Reed for promotion as a useful officer. But upon the whole, I think the list you have given me does not shine. I am very much ashamed of it. I am so vexed sometimes as almost to resolve to make interest to be a Colonel myself. I have almost vanity enough to think that I could make a figure in such a group. But a treacherous, shattered constitution is an eternal objection against my aspiring to military command. If it was not for this insuperable difficulty, I should certainly imitate old Noll Cromwell in one particular, that is, in launching into military life after forty, as much as I dislike his character and example in others. But enough of this.

I wish I could find materials anywhere in sufficient quantities to make good officers. A brave and able man, wherever he is, shall never want my vote for his advancement; nor shall an ignorant, awkward dastard ever want it for his dismission. Congress must assume a higher tone of discipline over officers as well as over the men.

With regard to encouragements in money and in land for soldiers to enlist during the war, I have ever been in favor of it, as the best economy and the best policy, and I have no doubt

that rewards in land will be given, after the war is over. But the majority are not of my mind for promising it now. I am the less anxious about it, for a reason which does not seem to have much weight however with the majority. Although it may cost us more, and we may put now and then a battle to hazard by the method we are in, yet we shall be less in danger of corruption and violence from a standing army, and our militia will acquire courage, experience, discipline, and hardiness in actual service.

I wish every man upon the continent was a soldier, and obliged, upon occasion, to fight, and determined to conquer or to die. Flight was unknown to the Romans. I wish it was to Americans. There was a flight from Quebec, and worse than a flight at the Cedars. If we do not atone for these disgraces, we are undone.

A more exalted love of their country, a more enthusiastic ardor for military glory, and deeper detestation, disdain, and horror of martial disgrace must be excited among our people, or we shall perish in infancy. I will certainly give my voice for devoting to the infernal gods every man, high or low, who shall be convicted of bashfulness on the day of battle.

P. S. Since the above was written Congress has accepted the report of the Board of War, and appointed Dyer and Chapman, Majors. I had much pleasure in promoting Dyer, not only from his own excellent character, but from respect to my good friend his father.

TO JONATHAN MASON.

Philadelphia, 21 August, 1776.

I had by yesterday's post the pleasure of your letter of the 12th instant. The account you give me of the books you have read and studied is very agreeable to me. Let me request you to pursue my lord Coke. The first Institute you say you have diligently studied. Let me advise you to study the second, third, and fourth Institutes with equal diligence. My lord Coke is justly styled the oracle of the law, and whoever is master of

his writings, is master of the laws of England. I should not have forgotten his Reports or his Entries. These, equally with his Institutes, demand and deserve the attention of the student.

It is a matter of curiosity rather than use, of speculation rather than practice, to contemplate what Mr. Selden calls the *antiquæ legis facies*. Yet I know a young mind as active and inquisitive as yours will not be easy without it. Horne, Bracton, Britton, Fleta, Thornton, Glanville, and Fortescue will exhibit to you this ancient face, and there you may contemplate all its beauties.

The Year-Books are also a great curiosity. You must make yourself sufficiently acquainted with law-french and with the abbreviated law-hand, to read and understand the cases reported in these books, when you have occasion to search a point. The French language will not only be necessary for you as a lawyer, but, if I mistake not, it will become every day more and more a necessary accomplishment of a gentleman in America.

There is another science, my dear Sir, that I must recommend to your most attentive consideration, and that is the Civil Law. You will find it so interspersed with history, oratory, law, politics, and war and commerce, that you will find advantages in it every day. Wood, Domat, Ayliffe, Taylor, ought to be read. But these should not suffice. You should go to the fountain-head, and drink deep of the Pierian spring. Justinian's Institutes, and all the commentators upon them that you can find, you ought to read. The Civil Law will come as fast into fashion in America as the French language, and from the same causes.

I think myself much obliged to Mr. Martin for his politeness to you, and should advise you to accept of his kind offer, provided you do not find the practice of his office interferes too much with your studies, which I do not think it will.

TO JOSEPH HAWLEY.

Philadelphia, 25 August, 1776.

It is so long since I had the pleasure of writing to you, or the honor of receiving a letter from you, that I have forgotten on

which side the balance of the account lies, at least which wrote the last letter. But ceremonies of this kind ought not to interrupt a free communication of sentiments in times so critical and important as these.

We have been apt to flatter ourselves with gay prospects of happiness to the people, prosperity to the State, and glory to our arms, from those free kinds of governments which are to be created in America. And it is very true that no people ever had a finer opportunity to settle things upon the best foundations. But yet I fear that human nature will be found to be the same in America as it has been in Europe, and that the true principles of liberty will not be sufficiently attended to.

Knowledge is among the most essential foundations of liberty. But is there not a jealousy or an envy taking place among the multitude, of men of learning, and a wish to exclude them from the public councils and from military command? I could mention many phenomena in various parts of these States which indicate such a growing disposition. To what cause shall I attribute the surprising conduct of the Massachusetts Bay? How has it happened that such an illiterate group of general and field-officers have been thrust into public view by that commonwealth, which, as it has an indisputable superiority of power to every other in America, as well as of experience and skill in war, ought to have set an example to her sisters, by sending into the field her best men, men of the most genius, learning, reflection, and address? Instead of this, every man you send into the army, as a General or a Colonel, exhibits a character which nobody ever heard of before, as an awkward, illiterate, illbred man. Who is General Fellows? And who is General Brickett? Who is Colonel Holman, Cary, Smith? This conduct is sinking the character of the province into the lowest contempt, and is injuring the service beyond description. Able officers are the soul of an army. Good officers will make good soldiers, if you give them human nature as a material to work upon. But ignorant, unambitious, unfeeling, unprincipled officers will make bad soldiers of the best men in the world.

I am ashamed and grieved to my inmost soul for the disgrace brought upon the Massachusetts in not having half its proportions of general officers. But there is not a single man among all our Colonels that I dare to recommend for a general officer,

except Knox and Porter, and these are so low down in the list, that it is dangerous promoting them over the heads of so many. If this is the effect of popular elections, it is but a poor panegyric upon such elections. I fear we shall find that popular elections are not oftener determined upon pure principles of merit, virtue, and public spirit than the nominations of a Court, if we do not take care. I fear there is an infinity of corruption in our elections already crept in. All kinds of favor, intrigue, and partiality in elections are as real corruption, in my mind, as threats and bribes. A popular government is the worst curse to which human nature can be devoted, when it is thoroughly corrupted. Despotism is better. A sober, conscientious habit of electing for the public good alone must be introduced, and every appearance of interest, favor, and partiality reprobated, or you will very soon make wise and honest men wish for monarchy again; nay, you will make them introduce it into America.

There is another particular in which it is manifest that the principles of liberty have not sufficient weight in men's minds, or are not well understood.

Equality of representation in the legislature is a first principle of liberty, and the moment the least departure from such equality takes place, that moment an inroad is made upon liberty. Yet, this essential principle is disregarded in many places in several of these republics. Every county is to have an equal voice, although some counties are six times more numerous and twelve times more wealthy. The same iniquity will be established in Congress. Rhode Island will have an equal weight with the Massachusetts, the Delaware government with Pennsylvania, and Georgia with Virginia. Thus we are sowing the seeds of ignorance, corruption, and injustice in the fairest field of liberty that ever appeared upon earth, even in the first attempts to cultivate it. You and I have very little to hope or expect for ourselves. But it is a poor consolation, under the cares of a whole life spent in the vindication of the principles of liberty, to see them violated in the first formation of governments, erected by the people themselves on their own authority, without the poisonous interposition of kings or priests.

TO WILLIAM TUDOR.

Philadelphia, 29 August, 1776.

I sit down now in the character of a schoolmaster, or a fellow of a college, to give myself airs, the pedantry and impertinence of which I have no doubt you will pardon, as the precepts I am about to deliver are of such vast importance to the public and so little practised, although they are so very easy and natural.

You must be sensible that intelligence is of the last consequence to the Congress, to the Assemblies, and to the public at large. It ought, therefore, to be transmitted as quick and frequently, and with as much exactness and particularity, as possible. In time of war, the letters from Generals and other officers of the army are usually the memorials and documents from whence annals are afterwards compiled and histories composed. They cannot be too careful, therefore, to transmit circumstantial narrations of facts, any more than, for their own safety, success, and glory, they can omit any means of obtaining the most exact, particular, and constant information. I have suffered inexpressible vexation upon many occasions, when I have seen public letters containing vague sketches and imperfect hints of enterprises and movements both of friends and enemies.

When an officer sits down to write a relation of a skirmish or a battle, I should think his first care would be to ascertain and describe the force of the enemy, their numbers, their commanders, their appointments, their motions, the situation of their encampment, the ground they occupied, or were attempting to possess themselves of. In the next place, I should think he would tell you the number of men which he sent against the enemy, the officer to whom he gave the command, the other general officers under him, the names of the regiments which composed the party, and then give you a detail of the marches and countermarches, the motions and manœuvres of both enemies and friends during the contention, the result of the whole transaction, on which side victory declared herself, and the number of killed and wounded on each side, the number of officers especially, and among them the most eminent by name. All these particulars, together with the loss or acquisition of

arms, ammunition, baggage, ordnance, and stores, ought to be related with as much precision as the writer can obtain. Recollect the letter of Colonel Campbell, lately taken prisoner at Boston, relating the circumstances of his captivity; how clearly and precisely he states his own strength and that of his enemy! how minutely he remembers every circumstance of the engagement! When facts are related in this manner, the reader, the public, and posterity are enabled to form a judgment upon the whole, to decide what is the consequence of the event, to determine the character and conduct of commanders and of troops, to ascertain their merit or demerit. In short, to pass just reflections, to praise or blame with propriety, to reward or punish with justice.

Read the relation of the battle between Catiline and his adversaries, in Sallust. You see the combatants. You feel the ardor of the battle. You see the blood of the slain, and you hear the wounded sigh and groan. But if you read our American relations of battles and sieges, in our newspapers or in private letters, or indeed in public official letters, you see little of this accuracy. You are left in confusion and uncertainty about every thing. It may one day be your fortune to be obliged to convey information to the public of the course of the events and transactions of a war, and whenever it is, I doubt not it will be faithfully done. At present, except by the commander-in-chief, and one or two others, it is done very superficially, crudely, and confusedly. A general officer should spare no pains to make himself master of the epistolary style, which is easy, natural, simple, and familiar, and of the historical style, too, which is equally simple, although a little more grave, solemn, and noble. Xenophon, Cæsar, Wolfe, Lee, are all indebted for a very large share of their fame to their pens.

The strange uncertainty in which we are still involved, concerning the late skirmishes upon Long Island, has given rise to the foregoing observations. My friends have been a little negligent in not writing me a line upon this occasion. I think we have suffered in our reputation for generalship in permitting the enemy to steal a march upon us. Greene's sickness, I conjecture, has been the cause of this. We have not been sufficiently vigilant in obtaining information of the motions and numbers of the enemy after their landing on Long Island, in

reconnoitring them, and in keeping out advanced guards and patrolling parties. Our officers do not seem sufficiently sensible of the importance of an observation of the King of Prussia, that stratagem, ambuscade, and ambush are the sublimest chapter in the art of war. Regular forces are never surprised. They are masters of rules for guarding themselves in every situation and contingency. The old officers among them are full of resources, wiles, artifices, and stratagems, to deceive, decoy, and overreach their adversaries. We must oppose art to art. We must not disdain to learn of them. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

My mind is more and more engaged with the thoughts of the importance of introducing into our army officers of parts and ambition. Captain Lee has been constantly upon my mind ever since you mentioned him. His father's merit and his own demand promotion for him. Pray let me know who are Nixon's Lieutenant-Colonel and Major. Who are Learned's Lieutenant-Colonel and Major? You said there were other young officers of parts and spirit in Glover's regiment. Let me know the name and character of every one of them, I conjure you.

Have we not put too much to the hazard in sending the greatest part of the army over to Long Island, from whence there is no retreat? Will not the enemy, by making regular approaches upon us, be able to force us, by means of their bombs and carcasses, out of our lines?

2 September.

So! The fishers have set a seine, and a whole school, a whole school of fish have swum into it, and been caught! The fowlers have set a net, and a whole flock of pigeons have alighted on the bed, and the net has been drawn over them. But the most insolent thing of all is, sending one of those very pigeons as a flutterer to Philadelphia,[1] in order to decoy the great flock of all. Did you ever see a decoy duck or a decoy brant?

Thank you for your last letter. There are a few words in it, which contain a hint of something, which, if fact, has been industriously hidden from us. "By the action of last Tuesday, we are convinced that many of our men are cowards." I beg

[1] John Sullivan.

of you to explain this, in detail. Do you mean the men who were in the skirmish? Those in the lines on Long Island, or those in New York? Do not subscribe your name. It shall be a secret. But I conjure you, as you love your country, to let me know.

20 September.

We have so many reports here of the infamous cowardice of the New England troops, especially of Fellows's and Parsons's brigades, in running away in spite of their two Generals, and General Washington too, that I am ashamed of my country. Pray, let me know the truth, and whether there is less courage in the northern than southern troops. The report of Fellows's and Parsons's brigades is confirmed by the General's letter.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Philadelphia, 4 September, 1776.

Mr. Hare, a brother of Mr. Robert Hare, the porter brewer in this city, is bound to Boston. He has boarded some time in the same house with me, and is very desirous of seeing the town of Boston. He is travelling to Boston merely from the curiosity of a traveller, and meddles not with politics. He has an inclination to see the public buildings, your church and the chapel particularly. I should be much obliged to you, if you would procure him the sight of as many of the public buildings in town as you can conveniently.

Our Generals, I fear, have made a mistake in retreating from Long Island. I fear they will retreat from the city of New York next. These are disagreeable events. I do not like these measures. I wish there was more firmness. But let not these things discourage. If they get possession of New York, Long Island, and Staten Island, these are more territory than their whole army can defend this year. They must keep their force together. The instant they divide it they are ruined. They cannot march into the country, for before they get ten miles into the country they are surrounded, or their retreat cut off. They cannot go up the North River to any purpose, because a few

months will make ice in it, in which their vessels cannot live. They must keep the most of their ships in the harbor of New York to defend their army. I sometimes think that Providence, against our own opinions and inclinations, has provided better for us in this instance than our own wisdom would have done. Had the enemy's fleet and army been kept from Long Island, they must and would have made an effort elsewhere for winter quarters. At Staten Island they could not have wintered. They must therefore have wintered at Boston, Rhode Island, or have gone to the southward, to Virginia, one of the Carolinas, or Georgia, and either of these cases would perhaps have been worse for us. The panic which is spread upon this occasion, is weak and unmanly; it excites my shame and indignation. But it is wearing off. If our whole army had been cut to pieces, it would have been shameful to have been so intimidated, as some are or pretend to be. Congress, I hope, will stand firm.

TO JAMES WARREN.[1]

Philadelphia, 8 September, 1776.

I am going to-morrow morning on an errand to Lord Howe, not to beg a pardon, I assure you, but to hear what he has to say. He sent Sullivan here to let us know that he wanted a conversation with some members of Congress. We are going to hear him. But as Congress have voted that they cannot send members to talk with him in their private capacities, but will send a committee of their body as representatives of the free and independent States of America, I presume his Lordship cannot see us, and I hope he will not; but if he should, the whole will terminate in nothing. Some think it will occasion a delay of military operations, which they say we much want. I am not of this mind. Some think it will clearly throw the odium of continuing this war on his Lordship and his master. I wish it may. Others think it will silence the tories and establish the timid whigs. I wish this also, but do not expect

[1] The letters which follow, relating to the visit of the committee of Congress to Lord Howe, should be read in connection with the autobiography, vol. iv. pp. 75–81.

it. But all these arguments, and twenty others as mighty, would not have convinced me of the necessity, propriety, or utility of this embassy, if Congress had not determined on it. I was *totis viribus* against it, from first to last. But upon this occasion New Hampshire, Connecticut, and even Virginia gave way. All sides agreed in sending me. The stanch and intrepid, I suppose, such as were enemies to the measure, as well as myself, pushed for me, that as little evil might come of it as possible. Others agreed to vote for me in order to entice some of our inflexibles to vote for the measure. You will hear more of this embassy. It will be famous enough.

Your secretary[1] will rip about this measure, and well he may. Nothing, I assure you, but the unanimous vote of Congress, the pressing solicitation of the firmest men in Congress, and the particular advice of my own colleagues, at least of Mr. Hancock and Mr. Gerry, would have induced me to accept this trust.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

8 September, 1776.

To-morrow morning Dr. Franklin, Mr. Rutledge, and your humble servant set off to see that rare curiosity, Lord Howe. Do not imagine from this that a panic has spread to Philadelphia. By no means. This is only refinement in policy. It has a deep, profound reach, no doubt. So deep that you cannot see to the bottom of it, I dare say. I am sure I cannot. Do not, however, be concerned. When you see the whole, as you will ere long, you will not find it very bad. I will write you the particulars as soon as I shall be at liberty to do it.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 16 September, 1776.

I very gratefully acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the[2] of August. I should have written to you from this place

[1] Samuel Adams.
[2] Left blank in the original. It refers to a letter written the 18th.

before, but I have not had leisure. My time is divided between Boston and Watertown, and though we are not engaged in matters of such magnitude as now employ your mind, there are a thousand things which call the attention of every man who is concerned for his country.

Our Assembly have appointed a committee to prepare a form of government; they have not yet reported. I believe they will agree in two legislative branches. Their great difficulty seems to be to determine upon a free and adequate representation. They are at present an unwieldy body. I will inform you more of this, when I shall have the materials.

The defence of this town, you know, has lain much upon our minds. Fortifications are erected upon several of the islands, which I am told require at least eight thousand men. You shall have a particular account, when I am at leisure. By my manner of writing you may conclude that I am now in haste. I have received no letter from Philadelphia or New York since I was favored with yours, nor can I find that any other person has. It might be of advantage to the common cause for us to know what is doing at both those important places. We have a report that a committee is appointed (as the expression is) "to meet the Howes," and that you are one. This, without flattery, gave me pleasure. I am indeed at a loss to conceive how such a movement could be made consistently with the honor of the Congress, but I have such an opinion of the wisdom of that body, that I must not doubt of the rectitude of the measure. I hope they will be vigilant and firm, for I am told that Lord Howe is, though not a great man, an artful courtier. May God give us wisdom, fortitude, perseverance, and every other virtue necessary for us to maintain that independence, which we have asserted! It would be ridiculous indeed, if we were to return to a state of slavery in a few weeks after we had thrown off the yoke and asserted our independence. The body of the people of America, I am persuaded, would resent it. But why do I write in this style? I rely upon the Congress and the committee. I wish, however, to know a little about this matter, for I confess I cannot account for it in my own mind. I will write to you soon. In the mean time, adieu.

What has been the issue of the debates upon a weighty subject when I left you, and another matter (you know what I

mean) of great importance? It is high time they were finished. Pay my due regards to the President, Messrs. Paine, Gerry, Colonel Lees, and other friends.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 17 September, 1776.

In a few lines of the 8th instant I promised you a more particular account of the conference. On Monday, the committee set off from Philadelphia, and reached Brunswick on Tuesday night. Wednesday morning, they proceeded to Amboy, and from thence to Staten Island, where they met the Lord Howe, by whom they were politely received and entertained. His lordship opened the conference by giving us an account of the motive which first induced him to attend to the dispute with America, which he said was the honor which had been done to his family by the Massachusetts Bay, which he prized very highly. From whence I concluded, in my own mind, that his lordship had not attended to the controversy earlier than the Port Bill and the Charter Bill, and consequently must have a very inadequate idea of the nature as well as of the rise and progress of the contest.

His lordship then observed, that he had requested this interview, that he might satisfy himself whether there was any probability that America would return to her allegiance; but he must observe to us, that he could not acknowledge us as members of Congress, or a committee of that body, but that he only desired this conversation with us as private gentlemen, in hopes that it might prepare the way for the people's returning to their allegiance and to an accommodation of the disputes between the two countries; that he had no power to treat with us as independent States, or in any other character than as British subjects and private gentlemen; but that upon our acknowledging ourselves to be British subjects, he had power to *consult* with us; that the act of parliament had given power to the king, upon certain conditions, of declaring the colonies to be at peace; and his commission gave him power to *confer*, *advise*,

and *consult* with any number or description of persons concerning the complaints of the people in America; that the king and ministry had very good dispositions to redress the grievances of the people, and reform the errors of administration in America; that his commission gave him power to converse with any persons whatever in America concerning the former instructions to governors, and the acts of parliament complained of; that the king and ministry were very willing to have all these revised and reconsidered, and if any errors had crept in, if they could be pointed out, were very willing that they should be rectified.

Mr. Rutledge mentioned to his Lordship what General Sullivan had said, that his Lordship told him he would set the acts of parliament wholly aside, and that parliament had no right to tax America, or meddle with her internal polity. His Lordship answered Mr. Rutledge that General Sullivan had misunderstood him, and extended his words much beyond their import.

His Lordship gave us a long account of his negotiations in order to obtain powers sufficiently ample for his purpose. He said he told them (the ministry, I suppose he meant) that those persons whom you call rebels, are the most proper to confer with of any, because they are the persons who complain of grievances. The others, those who are not in arms, and are not, according to your ideas, in rebellion, have no complaints or grievances; they are satisfied, and therefore it would be to no purpose to converse with them. To that his Lordship said, he would not accept the command or commission until he had full power to confer with any persons whom he should think proper, who had the most abilities and influence. But, having obtained these powers, he intended to have gone directly to Philadelphia, not to have treated with Congress as such, or to have acknowledged that body, but to have consulted with gentlemen of that body in their private capacities upon the subjects in his commission.

His Lordship did not incline to give us any further account of his powers, or to make any other propositions to us, in one capacity or another, than those which are contained in substance in the foregoing lines.

I have the pleasure to assure you, that there was no disagreement in opinion among the members of the committee upon

any one point. They were perfectly united in sentiment and in language, as they are in the result of the whole, which is, that his Lordship's powers are fully expressed in the late act of parliament, and that his commission contains no other authority than that of granting pardons, with such exceptions as the commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be at peace, upon submission, and of inquiring into the state of America of any persons with whom they might think proper to confer, advise, converse, and consult, even although they should be officers of the army or members of Congress, and then representing the result of their inquiries to the ministry, who, after all, might or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in the former instructions to governors, or propose, in parliament, any alterations in the acts complained of.

The whole affair of the commission appears to me, as it ever did, to be a bubble, an ambuscade, a mere insidious manœuvre, calculated only to decoy and deceive, and it is so gross, that they must have a wretched opinion of our generalship to suppose that we can fall into it.

The committee assured his Lordship, that they had no authority to wait upon him, or to treat or converse with him, in any other character but that of a committee of Congress, and as members of independent States; that the vote which was their commission, clearly ascertained their character; that the declaration which had been made of independence, was the result of long and cool deliberation; that it was made by Congress, after long and great reluctance, in obedience to the positive instructions of their constituents, every Assembly upon the continent having instructed their delegates to this purpose, and since the declaration has been made and published, it has been solemnly ratified and confirmed by the Assemblies, so that neither this committee nor that Congress which sent it here, have authority to treat in any other character than as independent States. One of the committee, Dr. Franklin, assured his Lordship that, in his private opinion, America would not again come under the domination of Great Britain, and therefore that it was the duty of every good man, on both sides of the water, to promote peace, and an acknowledgment of American independency, and a treaty of friendship and

alliance between the two countries. Another of the committee, Mr. J. A., assured his Lordship, that, in his private opinion, America would never treat in any other character than as independent States. The other member, Mr. Rutledge, concurred in the same opinion. His Lordship said he had no powers nor instructions upon that subject; it was entirely new. Mr. Rutledge observed to his Lordship that most of the colonies had submitted for two years to live without governments, and to all the inconveniences of anarchy, in hopes of reconciliation; but now they had instituted governments. Mr. J. A. observed that all the colonies had gone completely through a revolution; that they had taken all authority from the officers of the Crown, and had appointed officers of their own, which his Lordship might easily conceive had cost great struggles, and that they could not easily go back; and that Americans had too much understanding not to know that, after such a declaration as they had made, the government of Great Britain never would have any confidence in them, or could govern them again but by force of arms.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 30 September, 1776.

I am much obliged to you for your two letters of the 8th and 14th of this month, which I received together by the last post. The caution given in the first of these letters was well designed, and had it come to me as early as you had reason to expect it would, I should have been relieved of a full fortnight's anxiety of mind. I was indeed greatly "concerned" for the event of the proposed conference with Lord Howe. It is no compliment when I tell you that I fully confided in the understanding and the integrity of the gentlemen appointed by Congress; but, being totally ignorant of the motives which induced such a measure, I was fearful lest we might be brought into a situation of great delicacy and embarrassment. I perceive that his Lordship would not converse with you as members of Congress or a committee of that body, from whence I concluded that the conference did not take its rise on his part. As I am unac-

quainted with its origination and the powers of the committee, I must contemplate the whole affair as a refinement in policy beyond my reach, and content myself with remaining in the dark till I have the pleasure of seeing you, when I trust the mystery will be fully explained to me. Indeed, I am not so solicitous to know the motives from whence this conference sprang, or the manner in which it was brought up, as I am pleased with its conclusion. The sentiments and language of the committee, as they are related to me, were becoming the character they bore. They managed with great dexterity. They maintained the dignity of Congress, and, in my opinion, the independence of America stands now on a better footing than it did before. It affords me abundant satisfaction that the minister of the British King, commissioned to require, and fondly nourishing the hopes of receiving, the submission of America, was explicitly and authoritatively assured that neither the committee nor that Congress which sent them, had authority to treat in any other capacity than as *independent States*. His Lordship, it seems, "has no instruction on that subject." We must, therefore, fight it ought, and trust in God for success. I dare assure myself, that the most effectual care has before this time been taken for the continuance and support of our armies, not only for the remainder of the present, but for a future year. The people will cheerfully support their independence to the utmost. Their spirits will rise upon their knowing the result of the late conference. It has, you may depend upon it, been a matter of great expectation. Would it not be attended with a good effect, if an account of it was published by authority of Congress? It would, I should think, at least put it out of the power of disaffected men (and there are some of this character even here) to amuse their honest neighbors with vain hopes of reconciliation.

I wish that Congress would give the earliest notice to this State of what may be further expected to be done here for the support of the army. The season is advancing, or rather passing, fast.

I intended, when I sat down, to have written you a long epistle, but I am interrupted. I have a thousand avocations which require my attention. Many of them are too trifling to merit your notice. Adieu, my friend, I hope to see you soon.

S. A.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Baltimore, 9 January, 1777.

I have every day for a month past been anxiously expecting the pleasure of seeing you here, but now begin to suspect you do not intend to give us your assistance in person. I shall therefore do all that lies in my power to engage your epistolary aid. You will by every opportunity receive my letters, and, I dare say, you will be so civil as to answer at least some of them.

I have given our friend Warren, in one of my letters to him, the best reason I could for the sudden removal of Congress to this place. Possibly he may have communicated it to you. I confess it was not agreeable to my mind; but I have since altered my opinion, because we have done more important business in three weeks than we had done, and I believe should have done, at Philadelphia, in six months. As you are a member of Congress, you have a right to know all that has been done; but I dare not commit it to paper at a time when the safe carriage of letters is become so precarious. One thing I am very solicitous to inform you, because I know it will give you great satisfaction. If you recollect our conversation at New Haven, I fancy you will understand me when I tell you, that to *one place* we have added four, and increased the number of persons from *three* to six.[1] I hate this dark, mysterious manner of writing, but necessity requires it.

You have heard of the captivity of General Lee. Congress have directed General Washington to offer six Hessian field-officers in exchange for him. It is suspected that the enemy choose to consider him as a deserter, bring him to trial in a court-martial, and take his life. Assurances are ordered to be given to General Howe, that five of those officers, together with Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, will be detained, and all of them receive the same measure that shall be meted to him. This resolution will most certainly be executed.

[1] This probably refers to the resolve passed on the 30th December, directing commissioners to be sent to Vienna, Spain, Prussia, and Tuscany, in addition to France. By the selection of Arthur Lee to go to Spain, two new persons only were added, Messrs. Izard and William Lee.

We have this day passed a recommendation to the Council of Massachusetts Bay of a very important nature.[1] It will be sent by this express to the Council, to whom I refer you for a perusal of it.

Our affairs in France and Spain wear a promising aspect, and we have taken measures to put them on a respectable footing in other parts of Europe; and I flatter myself too much if we do not succeed.

The progress of the enemy through the Jerseys has chagrined me beyond measure; but I think we shall reap the advantage in the end. We have already beat a part of their army at Trenton, and the inclosed paper will give you a farther account which we credit, though not yet authenticated. The late behavior of the people of Jersey was owing to some of their leading men, who, instead of directing and animating, most shamefully deserted them. When they found a leader in the brave Colonel Ford, they followed him with alacrity. They have been treated with savage barbarity by the Hessians, but I believe more so by Britons. After they have been most inhumanly used in their persons, without regard to sex or age, and plundered of all they had, without the least compensation, Lord Howe and his brother (now Sir William, knight of the Bath) have condescended to offer them protections for the free enjoyment of their effects.

You have seen the power with which General Washington is vested for a limited time. Congress is very attentive to the northern army, and care is taken effectually to supply it with every thing necessary this winter for the next campaign. General Gates is here. How shall we make him the head of that army?

We are about establishing boards of war, ordnance, navy, and treasury, with a chamber of commerce, each of them to consist of gentlemen who are not members of Congress. By these means, I hope, our business will be done more systematically, speedily, and effectually.

Great and heavy complaints have been made of abuse in the Director-General's department in both our armies; some, I suppose, without grounds, others with too much reason. I have

[1] Recommending an attack upon Nova Scotia. See the Secret Journals, vol. ii. p. 51.

no doubt but as soon as a committee reports, which is expected this day, both Morgan and Stringer will be removed, as I think they ought.

To the eighty-eight battalions ordered to be raised, sixteen are to be added, which, with six to be raised out of the continent at large, will make one hundred and ten, besides three thousand horse, three regiments of artillery, and a company of engineers. We may expect fifty or sixty thousand of the enemy in June next. Their design will still be to subdue the obstinate States of New England. It was the intention that Carleton should winter in Albany, Howe in New York, and Clinton at Rhode Island, that, with reënforcements in the spring, they might be ready to attack New England on all sides. I hope every possible method will be used to quicken the new levies, and that the fortifications in the harbor of Boston will be in complete readiness. Much will depend upon our diligence this winter.

The attention of Congress is also turned to the southward. Forts Pitt and Randolph are to be garrisoned, and provisions laid up for two thousand men, six months. By the last accounts from South Carolina, we are informed that late arrivals have supplied them with every thing necessary for their defence.

I have written in great haste, and have time only to add, that I am, with sincere regards to your lady and family, very cordially your friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. Dr. Morgan and Dr. Stringer are dismissed without any reason assigned, which Congress could of right do, as they held their places during pleasure. The true reason, as I take it, was the general disgust, and the danger of the loss of an army arising therefrom.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Baltimore, 3 February, 1777.

It may not be a misspense of time to make a few observations upon the situation of some of the States at this time.

That part of New York, which is yet in our possession, is pretty well united and pretty firm. The Jerseys have recovered from their surprise, and are lending as much assistance as can well be expected from them. Their Assembly is now sitting, and is said to be well disposed to do what it can. The Assembly of Pennsylvania is also sitting. They have abolished the oath [1] which gave so much discontent to the people, and are gradually acquiring the confidence of the people, and opposition has subsided. The Delaware government have formed their Constitution, and the Assembly is now sitting. Maryland has formed its Constitution, and their Assembly, now sitting in consequence of it, is filling it up. There is a difficulty in two of the counties, but this will last but a little while. In Virginia, Governor Henry has recovered his health, has returned to Williamsburg, and is proceeding in his government with great industry. North Carolina have completed their government, and Mr. Caswell is Governor. In Virginia and North Carolina they have made an effort for the destruction of bigotry, which is very remarkable. They have abolished their establishments of Episcopacy so far as to give complete liberty of conscience to dissenters, an acquisition in favor of the rights of mankind, which is worth all the blood and treasure which has been or will be spent in this war. South Carolina and Georgia completed their government a long time ago. Thus I think there are but three States remaining which have not erected their governments, Massachusetts, New York, and New Hampshire.

These are good steps towards government in the State, which must be introduced and established before we can expect discipline in our armies, the *unum necessarium* to our salvation. I will be instant and incessant, in season and out of season, in inculcating these important truths, that nothing can save us but government in the State and discipline in the army. There are so many persons among my worthy constituents, who love liberty better than they understand it, that I expect to become unpopular by my preaching. But woe is me, if I preach it not. Woe will be to them if they do not hear.

P. S. I am terrified with the prospect of expense to our State, which I find no possibility of avoiding. I cannot get a

[1] To maintain the Constitution. See Reed's *Life of Reed*, vol. ii. p. 19, note.

horse kept in this town under a guinea a week. One hundred and four guineas a year for the keeping of two horses is intolerable, but cannot be avoided. Simple board is fifty shillings a week here, and seven dollars generally. I cannot get boarded under forty shillings, *i. e.* five dollars and a third, a week, and fifteen for my servant, besides finding for myself all my wood, candles, liquors, and washing. I would send home my servant and horses, but Congress is now a movable body, and it is impossible to travel and carry great loads of baggage without a servant and horses, besides the meanness of it in the eyes of the world.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Baltimore, 12 February, 1777.

Dear Sir, — The certificates and check-books for the loan-office I hope and presume are arrived in Boston before this time, and, notwithstanding the discouraging accounts which were given me when I was there, I still hope that a considerable sum of money will be obtained by their means.

It is my private opinion, however, that the interest of four per cent. is not an equitable allowance. I mean that four per cent. is not so much as the use of the money is honestly worth in the ordinary course of business, upon an average for a year; and I have accordingly exerted all the little faculties I had, in endeavoring, on Monday last, to raise the interest to six per cent. But after two days' debate, the question was lost by an equal division of the States present, five against five. New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia on one side, and Rhode Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, on the other. Here was an example of the inconvenience and injustice of voting by States. Nine gentlemen, representing about eight hundred thousand people, against eighteen gentlemen, representing a million and a half nearly, determined this point. Yet we must not be startled at this.

I think it my duty to mention this to you, because it must be astonishing to most people in our State, that the interest is so

low. I know they are at a loss to account for it upon any principles of equity or policy, and consequently may be disposed to blame their delegates; but you may depend upon it, they are not in fault.

I tremble for the consequences of this determination. If the loan officers should not procure us money, we must emit more, which will depreciate all which is already abroad, and so raise the prices of provisions and all the necessaries of life, that the additional expense to the continent for supplying their army and navy will be vastly more than the two per cent. in dispute, besides all the injustice, chicanery, extortion, oppression, and discontent, which is always occasioned everywhere by a depreciating medium of trade. I am much afraid of another mischief. I fear that for want of wisdom to raise the interest in season, we shall be necessitated, within a few months, to give eight or ten per cent., and not obtain the money we want after all.

I have been so often a witness of the miseries of this after-wisdom, that I am wearied to death of it.

Had a bounty of twenty dollars a man been offered soldiers last June, it would have procured more than the enormous bounties that are now offered will procure. Had government been assumed in the States twelve months sooner than it was, it might have been assumed with spirit, vigor, and decision, and would have obtained an habitual authority before the critical time came on, when the strongest nerves of government are necessary; whereas now, every new government is as feeble as water, and as brittle as glass.

Had we agreed upon a non-exportation, to commence when the non-importation commenced, what an immense sum should we have saved! Nay, very probably we should have occasioned a very different House of Commons to be chosen, the ministry to have been changed, and this war avoided. Thus it is. You, who will make no ill use of these observations, may read them, but the times are too delicate and critical to indulge freely and generally in such speculations. It is best, I believe, that no mention should be made that the rate of interest has been again debated, lest some saving men should withhold their money in hopes of compelling the public to raise the interest. If the interest should never be raised, those who lend

in our State will fare as well as others; if it should, the interest of all will be raised, that which is borrowed now as well as that which shall be borrowed hereafter. I sincerely wish that our people would lend their money freely. They will repent of it if they do not. We shall be compelled to emit such quantities, that every man, except a few villains, will lose more by depreciation than the two per cent. Not to mention again the scene of anarchy and horror, that a continuation of emissions will infallibly bring upon us.

The design of loan-offices was to prevent the farther depreciation of the bills by avoiding farther emissions. We might have emitted more bills promising an interest, but if those had been made a legal tender like the other bills, and, consequently mixed in the circulation with them, they would instantly have depreciated all the other bills four per cent., if the interest was four, and more than that, too, by increasing the quantity of circulating cash. In order to prevent these certificates from circulation, and consequently from depreciating the bills, we should give them such attributes as will induce men of fortune and others who usually lend money, to hoard them up. The persons who usually lend money are, 1. Men of fortune, who live upon their income, and these generally choose to have a surplusage to lay up every year to increase their capitals. 2. Opulent merchants who have more money than they choose to risk, or can conveniently employ in trade. 3. Widows, whose dower is often converted into money and placed out at interest, that they may receive an annual income to live upon, without the care and skill which is necessary to employ money advantageously in business. 4. Orphans, whose guardians seldom incline to hazard the property of their wards in business. 5. A few divines, lawyers, and physicians, who are able to lay by a little of their annual earnings. 6. Here and there a farmer and a tradesman, who is forehanded and frugal enough to make more money than he has occasion to spend. Add to these,—7. Schools, colleges, towns, parishes, and other societies, which sometimes let money. All these persons are much attached to their interest, and so anxious to make the most of it, that they compute and calculate it even to farthings and single days. These persons can get six per cent., generally, of private borrowers, on good security of mortgages or sureties.

Now, is it reasonable in the State to expect that monied men will lend to the public at a less interest than they can get from private persons?

I answer, yes, when the safety of the State is not in doubt, and when the medium of exchange has a stable value, because larger sums may be put together, and there is less trouble in collecting and receiving the interest, and the security is better. But the case is otherwise, when men are doubtful of the existence of the State, and it is worse still, when men see a prospect of depreciation in the medium of trade. All governments in distress are obliged to give a higher interest for money than when they are prosperous.

The interest of money always bears some proportion to the profits of trade. When the commerce of a country is small, lodged in few hands, and very profitable, the interest of money is very high. Charles the Fifth was necessitated to give twenty-four per cent. for money; afterwards it fell in Europe to twelve, and since to six, five, four, and three.

I think I shall never consent to go higher than six per cent., as much as I am an advocate for raising it to that, and in this I have been constant for full nine months. The burden of six per cent. upon the community will very soon be heavy enough. We must fall upon some other methods of ascertaining the capitals we borrow. A depreciating currency we must not have, it will ruin us. The medium of trade ought to be as unchangeable as truth, as immutable as morality. The least variation in its value does injustice to multitudes, and in proportion it injures the morals of the people, a point of the last importance in a republican government.

15 March, 1777.

Thus far I had written a long time ago, since which, after many days deliberation and debate, a vote passed for raising the interest to six per cent. If this measure should not procure us money, I know not what resource we shall explore.

To read this will be punishment enough for your omission to write to me all this while. I have received nothing from you since I left Boston.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 18 March, 1777.

I had this morning the pleasure of your favor of February 22d, by the post. This is the first letter from you since I left you.

You are anxious to know what expectations are to be entertained of foreign aid. I wish, Sir, it was in my power to communicate to you the little that I know of this matter; but I am under such injunctions and engagements, to communicate nothing relative to foreign affairs, that I ought not to do it; and, if I was at liberty, such is the risk of letters by the post or any other conveyance, that it would be imprudent.

Thus much I may say, that we have letters from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane; both agree that every thing is as they could wish; but the Doctor had but just arrived, and had not been to Paris, and, therefore, could know nothing of the Cabinet. The noted Dr. Williamson is arrived, full of encouraging matter; but what confidence is to be put in him, or what dependence is to be had in his intelligence, I know not. Franklin, Deane, and Williamson all agree in opinion that a war will take place. The reception that is given to our privateers and merchantmen in every part of the French dominions, is decisively encouraging. Wickes, who carried the Doctor, took two prizes. Persons enough offered to purchase them without condemnation or trial, and to run the risk of the illegality of it; perhaps they may be ransomed. Thus much you may depend on, that you may have any thing that France affords in the way of manufactures, merchandise, or warlike stores, for sending for it. I can go no further as yet. Congress have done as much as they ought to do, and more than I thought they ought to have done, before they did it. I will hazard a prophecy for once, and it is this, that there will as certainly be a general war in Europe, as there will be a kingdom of France or Spain. How soon it will be, I will not precisely determine; but I have no more doubt that it will be within a year to come than I have that it will be at all.

TO JOHN AVERY, JUNIOR.

Philadelphia, 21 March, 1777.

Sir, — I had this morning the pleasure of your favor of the 7th instant, and am glad to learn that my letter to you of the 10th of February was conveyed safely to your hand, and am obliged to you for communicating the resignation inclosed in it to the honorable Board.[1]

It would give me a great deal of uneasiness, if the honorable Board should not proceed forthwith to fill up the vacancy, if I thought, as you seem to suggest, that they would postpone it until they should see me; because the public must suffer in the mean time, and the vacancy must be filled up, after all, with some other gentleman. The resignation, you saw, was the result of long and anxious deliberation, was founded in reasons that will not alter, and, therefore, there will be no change in my determination. The difficulty you insinuate of finding a proper person, is merely imaginary. There is not a more suitable person in the State, nor belonging to it, than the very worthy gentleman who now presides in that court; and other gentlemen enough may be found to fill the place which will be left open by the removal of him and his honorable brothers, much more suitable to sit in that seat than I am.

The hope you give me, that our quota will be ready in a few weeks, rejoices me much. We want nothing but an army, new in the field, to answer our purpose. I had this morning the pleasure of a conversation with Major-General Mifflin, who assures me that he has tents of the very best quality completely ready for an army of twenty thousand men to take the field, and that, in three weeks, he shall have enough completed for ten thousand more; that he has intrenching tools enough completed for the whole army the whole campaign; that he has camp-kettles and canteens enough, and that he has horses, wagons, and magazines of forage ready. So that this department, which was last year in so much disorder, which occasioned us such losses of men, baggage, and stores, is now in a good arrangement, and promises more comfort to the army.

[1] Of the place of Chief Justice. Vol. iii. p. 25, note.

We are making every regulation in our power in the medical department, and a fine cargo of drugs has arrived, in addition to a large quantity before purchased by Dr. Shippen. So that we comfort ourselves with hopes that the health of the men will be better provided for than last year. In the commissary's department, I am informed that large quantities of meat have been salted down, that the men may not be obliged to live altogether upon fresh beef, as they did the last summer, in the extremest heat of the weather, which was thought to be prejudicial to their health.

We are doing every thing in our power for the discipline and the comfort of the army. Nothing in this contest has ever given me so much pain as the sufferings of the soldiers in sickness and for want of discipline, to which, indeed, that sickness was in a great measure owing.

You had good reasons for your expectations that we should have a hard struggle with Great Britain. Whoever has attended to the policy of the British court, and studied the characters which composed it, from the year 1761, must have seen abundant evidence of a fixed design to subjugate America to the complete domination of parliament; must have observed how systematically they have proceeded with all their art and all their force to accomplish this detestable purpose. Whoever was acquainted with the national history, must have been convinced how completely their government was corrupted, and the persons concerned in it lost to all the ties of honor, virtue, and religion;—ties which once restrained that nation; ties which alone can restrain any people from robbing and plundering all whom they think in their power. Whoever was acquainted with America, knew how unprepared she was; how inexperienced as statesmen and warriors; how unprovided with warlike stores; how defenceless in fortified places; and, what is infinitely worse than all the rest, how much infected with that selfishness, corruption, and venality (so unfriendly to the new governments she must assume), which have been the bane of Great Britain. Every such person, therefore, must have expected a hard struggle. Hard as it is, however, it will succeed. May Heaven direct us, and conduct us safely in due time to liberty, to virtue, and, of course, to glory!

TO WILLIAM TUDOR.

Philadelphia, 22 March, 1777.

Yours of the 16th I got yesterday. If Howe imagines that one fourth of Pennsylvania are Quakers, he is mistaken one half; for, upon the most exact inquiry, I find there is not more than one in eight of that denomination. If he imagines that ninety-nine in one hundred of those are his friends, he is mistaken again, for I believe in my conscience that a majority of them are friends to nobody but themselves; and Howe will find them full as great an encumbrance and embarrassment to him as we have found them to us.

The acquisition of Philadelphia would give Howe a temporary *éclat*, it is true, in Europe and America, but it would in the end prove his destruction.

Beware of those who make so free with the epithets of "sordid," "selfish," "ungenerous," and "ungrateful," &c. Let them look at home. The other colonies, it is true, contributed to support the poor of Boston. But for whose good did Boston resign her whole trade? For the good of all the others, as well as her own. And did not all the others go on with their trade to their vast profit, while Boston lost it all? If Boston had not, with a magnanimity and generosity hitherto without example or parallel in America, resigned its trade, and nobly stood the shock, Boston would have been the undisputed mistress among the slaves of America, and have drawn the wealth of the continent to herself, and so she would now, if the States should submit; because there is no other place that the crown officers of all denominations will resort to in such numbers. There would be the most numerous army, there the most powerful fleet, and there the whole board of excise, customs, duties, and revenues. For whose interest did Boston continue without trade and without government, and submit to a trifling force within herself? I remember a petition from Boston to Congress for leave to cut Gage and his troops to pieces, which was absolutely refused. To whom was it owing that all the rest of the continent besides Boston continued their exports nine months after all imports were stopped? Whereby millions were lost to the continent, whereto, in all probability, this whole war is

owing. I am not by this, however, justifying the policy of Massachusetts in regulating the prices of goods, which laid them under the necessity of prohibiting exportations. But other States ought not to complain of this, because the continent is procuring supplies from New England at one third of the price which they give for the same articles in other States. But they found they could not regulate the prices of things without prohibiting exportation, because other States, or persons belonging to them, were about purchasing every thing at the stated prices, and then exporting them at an immense profit.

As to the Massachusetts getting money, it is all a joke. They have lost their staple in this quarrel, which no other State has done. The fishery, I mean, which has destroyed their trade. Indigo, rice, tobacco, wheat, iron, the staples of other States, are not affected by this war like the fishery, the mast-trade, and lumber, which were the trade of Massachusetts. The privateers fitted out in that State belong to Congress, and to persons belonging to other States, I suppose near one half of them; and, besides, the continent could not carry on the war without the Massachusetts. Their seamen have supplied the army with every thing almost. Where, then, is the ingratitude? Do not be concerned about the Union. These peevishnesses I have been a witness to a long time. It is envy at bottom. They see the superiority of the Massachusetts to every one of them, in every point of view, and it frets them; but it will fret away.

Farther, for whose good has the Massachusetts sacrificed their trade, and privateers too, by their embargo? A restraint that others have not been pleased to subject themselves to, although it is more wanted both for manning the army and navy in them than it was in her. I hate disputes of this sort, and I never begin them; but when Massachusetts is attacked, I never have and never will fail to defend her, as far as truth and justice will warrant me, and no farther. There is a narrow spirit in many people, which seems to consider this contest as the affair of Boston and the Massachusetts, not the affair of the continent. All that they have to do is to get the character of heroes by their bravery, to wear genteel uniforms and armor, and to be thought to lay Boston and Massachusetts under vast

obligations. For my own part, I think the obligations mutual; but if there is a balance, it is clearly in favor of Massachusetts. I ever disdained, in Congress, in the most decisive terms, all obligations to any State or person, and I ever shall. The cause must be supported as a common cause, or it must fall. I will never solicit charity or favor as a politician, much less acknowledge obligations to others, who are under the strongest of all. Are there not persons who insinuate themselves into your army with a design to foment prejudices, excite jealousies, and raise clamors?

TO WILLIAM GORDON.

Philadelphia, 8 April, 1777.

I had your favor of 27th March by this day's post. That this country will go safely through this revolution, I am well convinced; but we have severe conflicts to endure yet, and, I hope, shall be prepared for them. Indeed, there is one enemy, who to me is more formidable than famine, pestilence, and the sword; I mean the corruption which is prevalent in so many American hearts, a depravity that is more inconsistent with our republican governments than light is with darkness. If we can once give energy enough to our governments, and discipline enough to our armies, to overcome this base principle of selfishness, to make citizens and soldiers feel themselves the children of the commonwealth, and love and revere their mother so much as to make their happiness consist in her service, I shall think we have a prospect of triumph indeed.

Your design, Sir, of collecting materials for a history of the rise, progress, and issue of the American Revolution, is liberal and generous; and, as you will find it a laborious undertaking, you ought to be encouraged and assisted in it. I should be very willing to contribute any thing towards so useful a work. But, I must frankly tell you, there is very little in my power. So far from making collections myself, I have very often destroyed the papers in my power, and my own minutes of events and their causes. We are hurried away in such a kind of delirium, arising from the multiplicity of affairs, and the disorder in

which they rise in review before us, that I confess myself unable even to recollect the circumstances of any transaction with sufficient precision to assist an historian. There are materials, however, in possession of the Secretary of State, and others in the War-Office, which will be preserved. The Massachusetts Bay, however, was the first theatre, and your history should begin at least from the year 1761. Your correspondent, whoever he is, has a talent at panegyric, enough to turn a head that has much less vanity in it than mine. Sometimes, however, the extravagance of flattery is an antidote to its poison. I shall not, however, be made to tremble to think of the expectations that will be formed from me by such wild praises. No such attributes belong to me; and I am under no concern about answering to what may be justly expected of me. Alas! who is equal to these things!

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 27 April, 1777.

Yours of April 3d I received. I must confess that I am at a loss to determine whether it is good policy in us to wish for a war between France and Britain, unless we could be sure that no other powers would engage in it. But if France engages, Spain will, and then all Europe will arrange themselves on one side and the other, and what consequences to us might be involved in it, I do not know. If we could have a free trade with Europe, I should rather run the risk of fighting it out with George and his present allies, provided he should get no other. I do not love to be entangled in the quarrels of Europe; I do not wish to be under obligations to any of them, and I am very unwilling they should rob us of the glory of vindicating our own liberties.

It is a cowardly spirit in our countrymen, which makes them pant with so much longing expectation after a French war. I have very often been ashamed to hear so many whigs groaning and sighing with despondency, and whining out their fears that we must be subdued, unless France should step in. Are we to be beholden to France for our liberties? France

has done so much already that the honor and dignity and reputation of Great Britain are concerned to resent it; and if she does not, France will trifle with her forever hereafter. She has received our ambassadors, protected our merchantmen, privateers, men-of-war, and prizes, admitted us freely to trade, lent us money, and supplied us with arms, ammunition, and warlike stores of every kind. This is notorious all over Europe. And she will do more, presently, if our dastardly despondency, in the midst of the finest prospects imaginable, does not discourage her. The surest and the only way to secure her arms in this cause, is for us to exert our own. For God's sake, then, do not fail of a single man of your quota. Get them at any rate, and by any means, rather than not have them.

I am more concerned about our revenue than the aid of France. Pray let the loan offices do their part, that we may not be compelled to make paper money as plenty, and, of course, as cheap as oak leaves. There is so much injustice in carrying on a war with a depreciating currency that we can hardly pray with confidence for success.

The confederation has been delayed, because the States were not fully represented. Congress is now full, and we are in the midst of it. It will soon be passed.

God prosper your new Constitution. But I am afraid you will meet the disapprobation of your constituents. It is a pity you should be obliged to lay it before them. It will divide and distract them. However, their will be done. If they suit themselves, they will please me.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 29 April, 1777.

I have but a few moments to write, and those it is my duty to improve, and faithfully to tell you, that unless you exert yourselves and send forward your troops, it is my firm opinion that Howe will recruit his army as fast as Washington, and that from Americans. The people of New York and New Jersey have been so scandalously neglected this winter, that they

are flying over to Howe in considerable numbers. Nay, our army under Washington is so dispirited by conscious weakness, that the spirit of desertion prevails among them, and there are more go over to Howe from our army than come from his to ours, two to one.

Every man of the Massachusetts quota ought to have been ready last December. And not one man has yet arrived in the field, and not three hundred men at Ticonderoga. It is our weakness, and want of power to protect the people, that makes tories and deserters. I have been abominably deceived about the troops. If Ticonderoga is not lost, it will be because it is not attacked; and if it should be, New England will bear all the shame and all the blame of it. In plain English, I beg to be supported or recalled. The torment of hearing eternally reflections upon my constituents, that they are all dead, all turned tories, that they are smallbeer, which froths and foams for a few moments while it is new, and then flattens down to worse than water, without being able to contradict or answer them, is what I will not endure.

By a letter from A. Lee, 20th February, Burgoyne is coming with ten thousand Germans and three thousand British to Boston. They will go first to Rhode Island, I suppose. From thence they will join Howe, or go to Boston, according to circumstances. If you make up a decent force under Washington in the Jerseys, Howe must order them all to him, or he will be demolished, for he has but a small force at present. If you leave Washington weak, they will march to Boston.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Philadelphia, 6 May, 1777.

About ten days ago I had the boldness to make a motion that a navy board should be established at Boston. Certain gentlemen looked struck and surprised. However, it passed. I have moved, I believe fifteen times, that a nomination should take place. Certain gentlemen looked cold. Two or three days ago, the nomination came on. Langdon, Vernon, Deshon,

Dalton, Orne, Henley, Smith, Cushing, and Warren, were nominated. This day the choice came on. At last, Vernon, Warren, and Deshon, were chosen. The board is to appoint its own clerk, who is to have five hundred dollars a year.

I hope you will engage in this business and conduct it with spirit. You cannot be Speaker, and do this duty too, I believe. I think the town of Boston will be offended. But I could not help it. This you will not mention. The salary for the commissioners is fifteen hundred dollars a year. You will have the building and fitting of all ships, the appointment of officers, the establishment of arsenals and magazines, which will take up your whole time; but it will be honorable to be so capitally concerned in laying a foundation of a great navy. The profit to you will be nothing; but the honor and the virtue the greater. I almost envy you this employment. I am weary of my own, and almost with my life. But I ought not to be weary in endeavoring to do well.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS.

Williamsburgh, 16 May, 1777.

Matters in our part of the continent are too much in quiet to send you news from hence. Our battalions for the continental service were some time ago so far filled as rendered the recommendation of a draught from the militia hardly requisite, and the more so as in this country it ever was the most unpopular and impracticable thing that could be attempted. Our people, even under the monarchical government, had learnt to consider it as the last of all oppressions. I learn from our delegates that the confederation is again on the carpet, a great and a necessary work, but I fear almost desperate. The point of representation is what most alarms me, as I fear the great and small colonies are bitterly determined not to cede. Will you be so good as to recollect the proposition I formerly made you in private, and try if you can work it into some good to save our union? It was, that any proposition might be negatived by the representatives of a majority of the people of America, or

of a majority of the colonies of America. The former secures the larger, the latter, the smaller colonies. I have mentioned it to many here. The good whigs, I think, will so far cede their opinions for the sake of the Union, and others we care little for.

The journals of Congress not being printed earlier, gives more uneasiness than I would wish ever to see produced by any act of that body, from whom alone I know our salvation can proceed. In our Assembly, even the best affected think it an indignity to freemen to be voted away, life and fortune, in the dark. Our House have lately written for a manuscript copy of your journals, not meaning to desire a communication of any thing ordered to be kept secret. I wish the regulation of the post-office, adopted by Congress last September, could be put in practice. It was for the riders to travel night and day, and to go their several stages three times a week. The speedy and frequent communication of intelligence is really of great consequence. So many falsehoods have been propagated that nothing now is believed unless coming from Congress or camp. Our people, merely for want of intelligence which they may rely on, are become lethargic and insensible of the state they are in. Had you ever a leisure moment, I should ask a letter from you sometimes, directed to the care of Mr. Dick, Fredericksburgh; but having nothing to give in return, it would be a tax on your charity as well as your time. The esteem I have for you privately, as well as for your public importance, will always render assurances of your health and happiness agreeable. I am, dear Sir, your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1777.

I had this morning the pleasure of your agreeable favor of the 16th instant, by the post, and rejoice to learn that your battalions were so far filled as to render a draught from the militia unnecessary. Draughts are dangerous measures, and only to be adopted in great extremities, even by a government

the most popular; although in such governments draughts will, perhaps, never be made but in such cases, — cases in which the people themselves see the necessity of it, which is widely different from draughts made by monarchs to carry on wars in which the people can see no interest of their own, nor any other object in view than the gratification of the avarice, ambition, caprice, envy, revenge, or vanity of a single tyrant. Draughts in the Massachusetts have not been unpopular, as they have been managed; for the persons draughted are commonly the wealthiest people, who become obliged to give large premiums to their poorer neighbors to take their places.

The great work of confederation drags heavily on; but I do not despair of it. The great and small colonies must be brought as near together as possible, and I am not without hopes that this may be done to the tolerable satisfaction of both. Your thought, Sir, that any proposition may be negatived by the representatives of a majority of the people, or of a majority of States, shall be attended to; and I will endeavor to get it introduced, if we cannot succeed in our wishes for a representation and a rule of voting perfectly equitable, which has no equal in my mind.

Nothing gives me more constant anxiety than the delays in publishing the journals. Yet, I hope gentlemen will have a little patience with us. We have had a committee constantly attending to this very thing for a long time. But we have too many irons in the fire, you know, for twenty hands, which is nearly the whole number we have had upon an average since last fall. The committee are now busy every day in correcting proof-sheets, so that I hope we shall soon do better. A committee on the post-office, too, have found a thousand diffieulties. The post is now extremely regular from north and south, although it comes but once a week. It is very difficult to get faithful riders to go oftener. And the expense is very high, and the profits, so dear is every thing, and so little correspondence is carried on except in franked letters, will not support the office. Mr. Hazard is now gone southward, in the character of surveyor of the post-office, and I hope will have as good success as he lately had, eastward, where he put the office into very good order.

We have no news from the camp but that the General and

army are in fine spirits, and begin to feel themselves powerful. We are anxiously waiting for news from abroad, and for my own part I am apprehensive of some insidious manœuvre from Great Britain to deceive us into disunion and then to destroy.

We want your industry and abilities here extremely. Financiers we want more than soldiers. The worst enemy we have now is poverty, real poverty in the shape of exuberant wealth. Pray come and help us to raise the value of our money and lower the prices of things. Without this we cannot carry on the war; with it, we can make it a diversion.

No poor mortals were ever more perplexed than we have been with three circumstances at once, any one of which, coming alone, would have been sufficient to have distressed any people. I mean a redundancy of the medium of exchange, a diminution of the quantity at market of the luxuries, the conveniences, and even the necessaries of life, and an increase of the demand for all of them, occasioned by two large armies in the country.

I shall ever esteem it a happiness to hear of your welfare, my dear Sir, and a much greater still to see you once more in Congress. Your country is not yet quite secure enough to excuse you for retreating to the delights of domestic life; yet, for the soul of me, when I attend to my own feelings, I cannot blame you.

B. FRANKLIN TO JAMES LOVELL.[1]

Passy, 17 October, 1777.

I received your letter (without date) communicating a method of secret writing, for which I am obliged to you. I have since received yours of July 4th.

I was very sensible before I left America, of the inconveniences attending the employment of foreign officers, and therefore immediately on my arrival here I gave all the discouragement in my power to their going over. But numbers had been previously engaged by Mr. Deane, who could not resist the applications made to him. I was concerned in sending the

[1] This letter, found among the papers of Mr. Adams, has not, it is believed, yet been published.

four engineers, and in making the contract with them; but, before they went, I had reason to dislike one of them, and to wish the agreement had not been made, for I foresaw the discontent that man was capable of producing among his companions, and I fancy that if, instead of America they had gone to Heaven, it would have been the same thing. You can have no conception of the arts and interest made use of to recommend, and engage us to recommend, very indifferent persons. The importunity is boundless. The numbers we refuse, incredible. Which if you knew, you would applaud us for, and on that account excuse the few we have been prevailed on to introduce to you. But, as somebody says,—

> "Poets lose half the praise they would have got
> Were it but known what they discreetly blot."

I wish we had an absolute order to give no letter of recommendation, or even introduction, for the future, to any foreign officer whatever. As to the instruction passed in Congress, respecting French officers who do not understand English, we never made it known here, from the same apprehension that you express. All that understood a little English would have thought themselves entitled to a commission, and the rest would have undertaken to learn it in the passage.

With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I inclose some papers, given me by the Baron Steuben, a Prussian officer who is gone over. Perhaps there may be useful hints in them.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Braintree, 6 December, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR,— You must expect for the future to find in me, situated as I am by a blissful fireside, surrounded by a wife and a parcel of chattering boys and girls, only a dealer in small politics.

I find the same perplexities here that we felt at Yorktown, a general inclination among the people to barter, and as general

an aversion to dealing in paper money of any denomination; guineas, half joes, and milled dollars in as high estimation as in Pennsylvania. The monied men, I am informed, generally decline receiving paper for their debts; many refuse; and it is said all will, very soon. There is a whispering about among the richer sort that an act is necessary for allowing a depreciation or an appreciation, as the case may be, upon specialties; and the poorer sort look cunning, and give hints that the rich are aiming at a depreciation.

I mention these facts, and leave you to draw your own inferences. I know and feel the delicacy of the subject, and am restrained by certain prudential considerations from writing my own sentiments freely. Two things I will venture to say. One is that I am sick of attempts to work impossibilities, and to alter the course of nature. Another is, *Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.* The rapid translation of property from hand to hand, the robbing of Peter to pay Paul, alarms and distresses me beyond measure. The man who lent another a hundred pounds in gold four years ago, and is paid now in paper, cannot purchase with it one quarter part in pork, beef, or land, of what he could when he lent the gold. This is fact, and facts are stubborn things in opposition to speculation. You have the happiest, nimblest spirit for climbing over difficulties, and for dispersing mists and seeing fair weather, when it is foggy or rainy, of any man I know. But this will be a serious perplexity even to you, before it is over. I am not out of my wits about it. It will not ruin our cause, great as the evil is, and if it was much greater. But it torments me to see injustice both to the public and to individuals so frequent. Every man's liberty and life are equally dear to him; every man, therefore, ought to be taxed equally for the defence of his life and liberty. That is, the poll-tax should be equal. Every man's property is equally dear both to himself and to the public: every man's property ought to be taxed for the defence of the public in proportion to the quantity of it. These are fundamental maxims of sound policy. But instead of this every man who had money due to him at the commencement of this war, has been already taxed three fourth parts of that money, besides his tax on his poll and estate in proportion to other people. And every man who owed money at the beginning of the war, has put three fourth parts

of it in his pocket as clear gain. The war, therefore, is immoderately gainful to some, and ruinous to others. This will never do.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Braintree, 24 December, 1777.

I cannot omit this opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of your kind favor of the 27th or 28th November, I say one or the other of those days, because, although the letter has no date, yet it says it was written on the day when a certain commission was voted me, and both the commissions are dated the 27th, although the copy of the resolution of Congress, by which I was appointed, is dated the 28th.

I should have wanted no motives nor arguments to induce me to accept of this momentous trust, if I could be sure that the public would be benefited by it. But when I see my brothers at the bar here so easily making fortunes for themselves and their families, and when I recollect that for four years I have abandoned myself and mine, and when I see my own children growing up in something very like real want, because I have taken no care of them, it requires as much philosophy as I am master of to determine to persevere in public life, and to engage in a new scene, for which, I fear, I am very ill qualified.

However, by the innuendoes in your letter, if I cannot do much good in this new department, I may possibly do less harm than some others. The want of a language for conversation and business is, however, all the objection that lies with much weight upon my mind. Although I have been not ignorant of the grammar and construction of the French tongue from my youth, yet I have never aimed at maintaining or even understanding conversation in it. And this talent, I suppose, I am too old to acquire, in any degree of perfection. However, I will try, and do my best. I will take books, and my whole time shall be devoted to it. Let me entreat the benefit of your constant correspondence.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Braintree, 8 February, 1778.

Two days ago, I was favored with your polite and elegant letter of January 22d. I have received so many of your letters, within a few months, containing such important matters, in so masterly a style, that I am ashamed to confess that I have answered but one of them, and that only with a few lines. I beg you would not impute this omission to inattention, negligence, or want of regard, but to its true cause, a confusion of business. I beg leave to assure you that I hold your correspondence inestimable, and will do every thing in my power to cultivate it.

Whether I shall be able to render any valuable service to our country in my new capacity, or not, is to me very uncertain. All I can say with confidence is, that whether in that or any other, I will never knowingly do it any injury. In spite of all the reflections that are cast upon human nature, and of all the satires on mankind, and especially on courts, I have ever found, or thought that I found, honesty to be the best policy. And it is as great a truth now as it was three thousand years ago, that the honest man is seldom forsaken.

Your sentiments, that we are but half taught in the great national arts of government and war, are, I fear, too just. And I fear that the subject, which is at present most essentially connected with our government and warfare, I mean money, is least understood of any. I fear the regulation of prices will produce ruin sooner than safety. It will starve the army and the country, or I am ignorant of every principle of commerce, coin, and society. Barter will be the only trade.

You are daily looking out for some great military character. Have you found none? Let me entreat you, my friend, to look back on the course of this war, and especially through the last campaign, and then tell me whether many countries of the world have ever furnished more and greater examples of fortitude, valor, and skill, than our little States have produced. We do not attend enough to our heroes, and we are too indulgent to those of opposite characters. Barton, Meigs, Green, Smith, Willet, Gansevoort, Herkimer, Stark, Arnold, Gates, and many,

many others, have exhibited to our view a series of actions, which all the exertions and skill of our enemies have never equalled in the present contest. I do not mean by this to derogate from the main army or its commander. Brandywine and Germantown can witness both bravery and skill, though unfortunate. The great fault of our officers is want of diligence and patience; they do not want bravery or knowledge. Let them learn to attend to their men, to their clothes, diet, air, exercise, medicines, arms, accoutrements, &c.; in short, let our officers learn to keep their men in health, &c., and to keep them together at their duty, not let twenty-five hundred men go to guard baggage wagons through a country where there could be no enemy, and I would answer for the bravery of our armies, for their discipline and good dispositions. If I may venture to prophesy, I think you will see in another campaign still greater exertions of heroism and magnanimity. The idea that any one man alone can save us, is too silly for any body but such weak men as Duché to harbor for a moment.

I am very glad you have not laid down your commission, and I conjure you, by all the ties of friendship to your country, not to do it. Men who are sensible of the evils in the hospital department, are the most likely to point them out to others, and to suggest remedies. Patience, patience, patience! the first, the last, and the middle virtue of a politician.

The lady you mention will not go abroad. A thousand reasons are against it. It would be too much happiness for him who is your sincere friend and servant.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, 27 November, 1778.

It is now a year since I left you, and I have heard very seldom from you since that time. I have written as often as I could, but so many vessels have been taken that I fear you have heard as seldom from me.

There is no news anywhere, excepting the innumerable reports circulated in every part of Europe by the emissaries of

England, every one of which I know to be false. They still, however, find stockjobbers and other persons to believe them. These lies are calculated to make it believed, that there are great dissensions between the French and Americans, and between the Americans with one another. No extravagance is too great. Ten thousand of General Washington's army gone over to Clinton. Count D'Estaing making a procession through the streets of Boston with the Host, and seizing a meeting-house for a chapel, and the d— knows what.

I suffer as much for want of intelligence from America, as we used to suffer in Congress for want of it from Europe.

Mr. D. writes a gentleman here, that on the 14th of September Congress took up foreign affairs, and determined to have but one commissioner here. If this is the case, I shall be at a loss how to conduct myself, unless you recall me. Dr. F., no doubt, will be appointed for this court. If you appoint me for any other, especially that which is mentioned to me, Vienna, it will be more disagreeable to me than to be recalled; because Vienna is the court of all Europe, as I conceive at present, the least likely to receive your agent. I should, therefore, be reduced to the necessity of residing at Paris in idleness, or of travelling to Germany, and living there in greater idleness still; in either case, at a great and useless expense.

In time of peace, nothing would give me greater pleasure than travelling; but at present my heart is too much affected with the miseries of this war, for me to take pleasure in a mere gratification of curiosity, or even a pursuit of taste in arts, or knowledge in sciences. To return home immediately, some persons here say would give offence, and be wrong. To wait to write for leave, would be losing time, and putting you to some expense; however, I will determine nothing until I know what is done. Remember me with the tenderest affection, and greatest respect to your colleagues, and all others that deserve it.

TO MRS. WARREN.

Passy, 15 December, 1778.

MADAM, — A few days ago, I had the pleasure of your obliging letter of the 15th of October. It came by the post, and

single, not a line from any other person, so that I knew not by what means it reached Lorient. It was not, however, the less welcome to me. Its intrinsic excellence would have recommended it, whoever had written it. The merit of the writer would have made it dear to me, if the letter itself had been indifferent, a supposition not very easy to make in this case.

I am sorry, very sorry, for our common country, that the unshaken patriot you mention should think of retiring;[1] but I cannot blame him, because my own thoughts are constantly running in the same way, and I am determined, with submission, to do the same thing.

I hope, however, Madam, that there is not so total a change of manners, as some appearances may indicate. A paper currency, fluctuating in its value, will ever produce appearances in the political, commercial, and even the moral world, that are very shocking at first sight; but, upon examination, they will not be found to proceed from a total want of principle, but, for the most part, from necessity.

Who will take the helm, Madam, and, indeed, who will build the ship, I know not. But of one thing I am well convinced, that a great part of the evils you mention arise from the neglect to model the Constitution and fix the Government. These things must be finished, and the dispute, who shall be the head, is much less important than whether we shall have any.

I am happy to learn, Madam, that so many of the most respectable strangers have had an opportunity to visit you. I am pleased with this, because it has given you an opportunity of speculating upon these illustrious characters, and because it has given them an opportunity of observing that their new ally can boast of female characters equal to any in Europe.

I have not the honor to know Mrs. Holker. She lives at Rouen, at a distance. However, I have gratified Mr. H.'s father with a sight of his son's portrait drawn by a lady, which he could not read without the tears gushing from both his eyes.

As to portraits, Madam, I dare not try my hand as yet. But my design is to retire, like my friend, and spend all my leisure hours in writing a history of this revolution, and, with a hand as severe as Tacitus, I wish to God it was as eloquent, draw

[1] General Warren.

the portrait of every character that has figured in the business. But, when it is done, I will dig a vault, and bury the manuscript, with a positive injunction that it shall not be opened till a hundred years after my death.

What shall I say, Madam, to your question, whether I am as much in the good graces of the ladies as my venerable colleague? Ah, no! Alas, alas, no! The ladies of this country, Madam, have an unaccountable passion for old age, whereas our countrywomen, you know, Madam, have rather a complaisance for youth, if I remember right. This is rather unlucky for me, because here I have nothing to do but wish that I was seventy years old, and, when I get back to America, I shall be obliged to wish myself back again to five-and-twenty.

I will take the liberty to mention an anecdote or two, Madam, among a multitude, to show you how unfortunate I am in being so young. A gentleman introduced me, the other day, to a lady. "*Voilà, Madame,*" said he, "*Monsieur Adams, notre ami, le collègue de Monsieur Franklin.*" "*Je suis enchanté de voir Monsieur Adams,*" answered the lady. "*Embrassez le donc,*" replied the gentleman. "*Ah, non, Monsieur,*" said the lady, "*il est trop jeune.*

So that you see I must wait patiently full thirty years longer before I can be so great a favorite.

Madam, I can give you no news. The Lords and Commons have refused to censure the manifesto of the commissioners. That unhappy nation are going on in their frenzy; but there is an awful gloom and melancholy among them, and with reason.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Passy, 20 February, 1779.

. . . . . .

I cannot lay aside my pen without saying, that the accusations before Congress against the Messrs. Lee and, I know not who besides, distress me beyond measure. I fear they will perpetuate altercation, without bringing any great truths to light for the benefit of the public. I have sighed, and mourned, and wept, for that intemperance of passions, which I very early dis-

covered here, without being able to soften or to cool it in the least degree. I wish I could draw the portrait of every character here, as it appears in my eyes; but this would be imprudent, and, if it should be known, would do public mischief, full enough of which has been done already by indiscretion.

Our old incidental agent is an honest man, faithful and zealous in our cause. But there is an acrimony in his temper, there is a jealousy, there is an obstinacy, and a want of candor at times, and an affectation of secrecy, the fruit of jealousy, which renders him disagreeable often to his friends, makes him enemies, and gives them infinite advantages over him. That he has had great provocations here, I never doubted, and since the appearance of the address less than ever.[1]

There is another character here, exceedingly respectable in fortune, education, travel, honor, integrity, love of his country, and zeal in its cause; but Tacitus would say his passions are always strong, often violent; and he has not experience in public life.[2] These two gentlemen have been very intimate, and have encouraged, no doubt, and often irritated each other. Another thing, I think that other gentleman ought not to have been here; he should have been in Italy or in America; or, being here, I really think he ought not to have interfered so much. This is simply my opinion. I may be wrong. That that gentleman thought he was doing his duty, I am clear. But of this I am persuaded, that if he had been in Italy, things would never have gone to the lengths they have.

On the other hand, most of the old connections of the Dr. and Mr. Deane were filled with prejudices against those two gentlemen. One party was striving to get the better of the other, to lower its reputation and diminish its authority.

In this chaos I found things, and have been tossed in it. On the other hand, there was a monopoly of reputation here, and an indecency in displaying it, which did great injustice to the real merit of others, that I do not wonder was resented. There was an indolence there was a dissipation, which gave just occasion of complaint, and there was a complaisance to interested adventurers. There was an intimacy with stockjobbers; there was an acquaintance with persons from England, which gave just

[1] Arthur Lee. The Address referred to is Silas Deane's.

[2] Ralph Izard.

occasion of jealousy, however innocent the intentions were. I have learned that total silence is enough to procure a character for prudence, whatever indiscretions a man may commit.

In this state of things, Congress have had the wisdom and the fortitude to do the only thing which could be done for putting matters on a better footing; but this will last a very little while, if money matters are not separated from political. Some other thing must be done; some resolution must be passed, forbidding every man, in the most positive terms, who has any connection with your minister here, from having any connection with English stocks, insurances, &c., and forbidding all correspondence with them. There is in England a practice of making insurances on political events, which has interested the whole alley in American politics, and has thrown all into distraction.

I have been wholly without information of what was passing in Congress and, indeed, in America, especially in Philadelphia. My friends, I know, have been engaged in doing the public business, not in strengthening the hands of individuals or parties here. But bushels of letters have come to adventurers here, containing information more exact in some things, and not so true in others as they ought to be.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Passy, 28 February, 1779.

Dear Sir, — Your letter by the Marquis de Lafayette I have received, and it contained so handsome a testimony to the merit of that gallant young nobleman, as well as so many judicious observations on other subjects, that I have ventured to permit it to be translated and published.

The complaint against the family of Lees is a very extraordinary thing indeed. I am no idolater of that family or any other; but I believe their greatest fault is having more men of merit in it than any other family; and if that family fails the American cause, or grows unpopular among their fellow-citizens, I know not what family or what person will stand the test.

There is reason, however, to be upon our guard against the power of a family of so much merit; and if the complaint had only been, that one of the family was minister at the Courts of Versailles and Madrid, another at Vienna and Berlin, I would have joined in that with all my heart. But this, to my certain knowledge, was not the fault of the family, but partly owing to accident, and partly because other gentlemen refused or declined to undertake so dangerous a voyage and so difficult a service.

If the complaint had been confined to the want of figure, dignity, and address, I should have left the discussion of such important questions to those who think so much of them, and these might have determined whether the complainers or complainees have most to boast of in this kind.

If the complaint had been confined to the subject of temper, I should not have thought it worth while to consider long, in order to determine which was the most inconvenient to the State, a little too much asperity, or a little too much good nature, a little too much acid, or a little too much oil.

But when the complaint becomes so outrageous as to throw about the world insinuations of infidelity and breach of trust against some of the most faithful and inflexible men in the community, it becomes the cause of every virtuous man, and such injured characters must be vindicated, or the State undone.

The publication of this address[1] to the universe, instead of making it in writing to Congress, was a measure beyond all example dangerous and destructive. But enough of this. Good, I hope, will come out of it, and lessons will be learned from it. Lessons of moderation are so much wanted, that I, even I, am obliged to become a preacher of that great virtue; but with as little success as most other preachers.

So much for ourselves, now for our enemies. Keppel's trial has wrought up parties to a great heat in England. Tumults and discontents are very general throughout the three kingdoms. The two Howes, with many members of opposition in both houses, seem to be arranging themselves for warm work; and impeachments are talked of and expected. Whether Palliser will have a trial, is uncertain; if he should, this will probably complete the rage and distraction. Lord North's loan has

[1] Silas Deane's. See vol. iii. p. 191.

labored a long time; it was settled the 23d, at three per cent. for perpetuity, an annuity of three and three fourths per cent. for twenty-nine years, and seven lottery tickets for every thousand pounds. The ticket is ten pounds, but always gains two or three per ticket before the drawing, and every year the war continues, the interest must be greater, and the expense greater. Almost all parties seem to say freely that the kingdom is undone; yet none of them have sense and spirit enough to propose the only means for preventing the ruin they apprehend. Their conquest of St. Lucie will only be a grave to their troops, of whom they have none to spare.

JAMES LOVELL TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Confidential.)

Philadelphia, 13 June, 1779.

I shall not look through the notes in my almanac to see whether I have written to you twenty-two or twenty-four times. I shall go upon the easier task of acknowledging all those I have had from you, namely: 6th December, 1778, received 16th February, 1779, answered the 17th. 26th September, 1778, received 4th March, 1779, answered 28th April.

Three months ago Mr. G.[1] communicated to us that Spain was mediating, and that we ought to take speedy, decisive measures for peace. London Gazettes told us the first part; and it appears strange that neither Dr. F., Mr. L., nor you have *hinted* this matter to us *lately*, if you did not *avow* it authoritatively. We have some wise men here, who are sure *they* could fish out all the court secrets. In the various attempts to pull down A. L. to make way for some one to go from hence "who knows all the present circumstances of America, and therefore could negotiate properly," your want of ability to give us information such as we wish for, or fancy can be had, is said to spring from the suspicions of the French Court respecting one of you; and something like an attempt to dictate to us a choice has been

[1] Gérard, the French minister.

seen here. An extract of a letter from the Count de V. has been quoted, "*Je crains Monsieur A. L. et ses entours*," and we are tempted to think that therefore the communication beforementioned came through Mr. G. But this is different from what was once the conduct; for Mr. Deane tells us that he was *directed* to tell Dr. F. what he did not *choose* to tell Mr. Lee, or, as he wishes to have it believed, which he was *forbidden* to tell him. I am persuaded[1] Dr. F. would not readily disgust the French Court in such a point. If there is any seriousness in the business, I suppose the Court stood upon the *punctilio* of not having the compliment of a minister plenipotentiary returned at that time. Mr. Lee's enemies have produced nothing but innuendoes to procure his removal, while they dare not deny his integrity and abilities in our service. Mr. D. says, the Lees are not fit for transactions with a "gallant" nation. But doubtless those men who want his place would be very gallant indeed on certain points in negotiation. The eastern States are charged with wanting what they have no right to, and what is of "no interest to the southern States." Plenty are these local sentiments lately; and R. H. Lee with H. Laurens are squinted at as two monsters on the other side of Susquehannah, who pursue points in which the southern States have *no* interest. Would France or England reason that way on the fishery? I expect, however, that we shall coalesce in a few days upon what may be *ultimata* ready for some future day of pacification, when Britain shall be restored to her senses. She is quite wild and foolish yet, in my opinion.

You will be scarcely able by our motley journals to understand what we are about. Why did I vote for your name to be inserted, April 20th, page 10? A majority against me had before resolved that the names should be added; that Dr. Franklin's should be inserted; but did not proceed by yeas and nays, therefore I was entrapped. Not having my *nay* appear on Dr.

[1] In what purports to be a duplicate of this letter, Mr. Lovell makes many variations. The following occurs here:

"I am persuaded Dr. Franklin would not readily blab any matter to Mr. Lee which the Court might confidentially tell *him*. But it may be said the Doctor was perhaps at that period only on a par with Mr. Lee and you, so that he could not officially convey the news of a negotiation from France to us, without consulting Mr. Lee. It has been attempted to persuade us that Spain is disgusted with Mr. Lee. If more than innuendoes had been addressed, we should have made a new appointment perhaps; though it is a very delicate matter."

Franklin, could I say *nay* to Deane, the *causa malorum?* And as it was not *mutual* suspicions, &c., I could not exclude you, who was suspected and stigmatized in the report of the committee, though more to the disgrace of Mr. Izard than yourself, if there was any disgrace in the circumstance of his imagining that your connection with the "eaters and distillers of molasses"[1] had warped your judgment against the interest of other parts of the continent. Mr. Izard has good testimony to his many estimable qualities, but his best friends say he is irascible even when he has not a fit of the gout, as he unfortunately had when he was writing of Dr. Franklin, and probably, too, when he made his strictures upon your opinion of the 11th and 12th articles.[2]

Every *appearance* is that you will not be passed over without honorable notice, when the report receives its finishing discussion. My own settled opinion of you leads me the more readily to think there is no plot concealed under the professions in your favor, which have fallen from men lately, whose general conduct is of a kind to make me cry,

Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.[3]

. . . . . .

I firmly believe that your friend Lincoln has got complete success over the southern enemy. He will receive permission

[1] See vol. iii. p. 48, note.

[2] The version of the duplicate is more to the point. Mr. L. says:

"A majority against me had resolved, 1st, that the names should be added; 2dly, that Dr. Franklin's should be inserted; but did not proceed by yeas and nays; therefore I was entrapped. Not having my nay to show in the first, I was forced to go through uniformly. It being as true that suspicions and animosities had been minuted by the committee respecting you as respecting the rest; for the report did not say *mutual* suspicions, &c. It was calculated to open the door for several new elections."

[3] The 4th article, reported by the committee of thirteen, upon which the question arose, is in the following words:

"That suspicions and animosities have arisen among the said commissioners, which may be highly prejudicial to the honor and interest of the United States."

Mr. Duane moved that the names of the commissioners be added, taking the sense of the House on each name to be added, which motion prevailed.

Dr. Franklin's name was inserted without yeas and nays. The names of all the other commissioners were inserted by large majorities, excepting Mr. Adams's. In his case the friends of Arthur Lee appear to have voted to include him, whilst his opponents took the other side, thus acting on both sides, contrary to the prevailing affinities in Congress. This explains Mr. Lovell's allusions.

to return hither just in the hours of glory, so that he may attend to his wound, which was greatly irritated by his expedition to Carolina. This night is the fourteenth since we first had the news of his victory, *via* New Providence. Confirmation is come from several quarters, but still we have not an express.[1] Tucker has sent in a twenty-four gun ship this afternoon, which did not fire a shot at him before striking. It is at the capes with the Confederacy, one of the finest frigates in any service, as is said by voyagers.

I wish you every happiness, being, &c.

J. Lovell.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Braintree, 10 September, 1779.

I received by last post your obliging letter of 24th of August. The sight of your handwriting gave me more pleasure than you are aware. I would send you copies of my letters to you, if they were not out of date at this time.

I thank you for your compliment on my letter to Congress.[2] It is a long dull story; but I think several things appear from it that are of great importance. It appears that the general arrangement of interests and designs in Europe is more favorable for us than even the most sanguine of us could have expected; that we have no reason to fear that England will be able to form one alliance against us; that, if she should, that one will be the House of Austria, notwithstanding there is an excellent Austrian princess on the throne of France, in which case Prussia and Russia, too, would join France and us; that the King of Prussia and Holland should be cultivated; and, what perhaps is of as much importance as all the rest, it appears from it that France has already derived the most solid and essential advantages from our separation from Great Britain and alliance with her; that she will continue to derive still greater benefits, and therefore that we may rely upon her friendship, without sacrificing any essential right or interest from a

[1] Confirmation never came.

[2] Vol. vii. pp. 99–110.

servile complaisance to her, much less to the low intrigues of a few hucksters.

I have done your message to Portia; she desires me to tell you, that there is great *encouragement* to undertake embassies to Europe, and she is very happy to hear of so certain a sign of grace, as your impatience to join our sacred order.[1]

Your resolution, that no person shall be appointed to any office within twelve months of his being a member of Congress, may be too much. I should rather prefer a resolution never to appoint any man abroad that they do not personally know. Yet I think that resolutions so universal had better be avoided in either case.

You have several very great men, by all relation, who have joined Congress since I left it. No doubt, they are thought superior to others who have gone before them. If they are, both in abilities and virtues, I wish them success. I have a great desire to see the journals at, before, and after my appointment to go to France, and all the journals. I should be greatly obliged to you for them. I should also be very happy to be informed by what majority I was chosen, and who was for and against, and who else in nomination. I never heard a word on this subject. Do not again forget to write to your old and sincere friend.

Thank you for voting me clear of suspicions, &c., dishonorable to the States.[2] I have a bone to pick with Adams and Lovell for their votes on that occasion.

TO THOMAS MCKEAN.

Braintree, 20 September, 1779.

It is a long time since I had the pleasure to see you; but my esteem is not at all diminished. None of us have any thing to boast of in these times, in respect to the happiness of life. You have been in disagreeable scenes, I doubt not; mine have been much worse than I expected.

[1] Mr. Gerry was yet unmarried.

[2] Vol. vii. p. 3, note.

I never heard of any jealousy, or envy, or malevolence among our commissioners at Paris until my arrival at Bordeaux. Judge of my surprise, grief, and mortification, then, when I heard at Bordeaux, and found on my arrival at Paris, the heat and fury to which it had arisen. Both sides most earnestly besieged me, in order to get me to join their party; but I saw the only part a man of honor and confidence could take in my situation, was to join neither. Accordingly, I invariably and firmly refused to have any thing to do with their disputes, before my arrival, or after, any further than they should unavoidably intermix with the public questions, in which my office obliged me to give an opinion; and then, to give it impartially for the public good. I accordingly lived not only in peace, but in apparent friendship with both sides. If there was any animosity in either against me personally, it was very artfully concealed from me, and certainly never had any just cause. Since my arrival here, I am informed that I have been honored with a little of the ill humor of both sides, and I beg your assistance in Congress, that I may be informed of the particulars as I have requested. Congress have done the only thing that could dissolve the charm; that is, left one alone.

An opposition in parliament, in a house of assembly, in a council, in Congress, is highly useful and necessary to balance individuals, and bodies, and interests one against another, and bring the truth to light, and justice to prevail. But an opposition in a foreign embassy, in the circumstances of this country and of Europe, is ruin. There can be no secrecy, no confidence, when such an opposition takes place, much less where there are such infernal quarrels as were between my colleagues.

It would be better to employ a single man of sense, even although he should be as selfish and interested as is possible, consistent with fealty to his country, than three honest men, even of greater abilities, any two of whom should be at open variance with each other. It would be better to employ a single stockjobber or a single monopolizer. It is better still, no doubt, to employ one man of virtue and ability.

I presume Congress intend to appoint a secretary to the commission, and to appoint consuls for the management of commercial and maritime matters. It is highly necessary. Franklin is a wit and a humorist, I know. He may be a phi-

losopher, for what I know. But he is not a sufficient statesman for all the business he is in. He knows too little of American affairs, of the politics of Europe, and takes too little pains to inform himself of either, to be sufficient for all these things, to be ambassador, secretary, admiral, consular agent, &c. Yet such is his name, on both sides the water, that it is best, perhaps, that he should be left there; but a secretary and consuls should be appointed to do the business, or it will not be done: or, if done, it will be by people who insinuate themselves into his confidence, without either such heads or hearts as Congress should trust. He is too old, too infirm, too indolent and dissipated, to be sufficient for the discharge of all the important duties of ambassador, board of war, board of treasury, commissary of prisoners, &c., &c., &c., as he is at present, in that department, besides an immense correspondence and acquaintance, each of which would be enough for the whole time of the most active man in the vigor of youth.

I write plainly, but confidentially. I write to you, because I believe you have not been heated with any of the personal disputes between or concerning the commissioners.

JAMES LOVELL TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Confidential.)

Philadelphia, Monday, 27 September, 1779.

Not knowing, my dear Sir, how certain things now in agitation may this day be terminated here, I choose to state at this time some proceedings, two days old, that I may not be thought to give them a gloss in the style of an after-prophet turned historian or painter. For a groundwork I refer you to the report of the committee of thirteen, with its consequent yeas and nays, which is certainly now in your hands in print;[1] and also to what you must have somehow or other come to the knowledge of, respecting a long struggle about cod and had-

[1] See the Journal of Congress for 1779, pp. 29, 149, 150, 157–167, 179, 246–251.

dock;[1] and further, to your own reading and judgment concerning the parliamentary propriety of appointing a man to carry into effect, by all the powers of skilful negotiation, a measure to which he has been opposed tooth and nail in the whole preparatory progress of it. Nor can I omit to call to your mind what I already must have written either to you or the lovely Portia, that the *lentor of proceedings here* should account for the appearances of injustice done you by an assembly, nine tenths of which profess, and probably have, an esteem for you.

Two things are to be transacted with Britain, a major and consequent minor, as soon as her madness and folly begin to subside. But only one agent is to manage them. The commissions are drawn, and instructions also. The blanks are to be filled. Dr. Franklin was nominated, *out of order*. This led one man to suggest that he should find himself obliged, when such a nomination should again be attempted, and *done in order*, to follow it with the nomination of Dr. Lee, as a *much more suitable character*, which he would endeavor to make plain by various testimonies in his possession, part known and part yet unknown to the Assembly. A question was then moved by a gentleman in that company, named Matthews, and seconded by one named Lovell,[2] that no member, while there acting, or for nine months after, should be elected to a place, for which he, or another for him, received any salary, &c. By yeas and nays the nine months' part[3] was lost; and the other part, by the previous question. J. Adams was nominated by Mr. Laurens, and J. Jay by Mer. Smith. Adjourned to meet on the next day (Sunday) at 10 o'clock. Met. Balloted, five for J. A., four for J. J., three could not agree. On a second trial, six for J. A., four for J. J., one could not agree. The *mover* of the motion above, not being likely to consent with his colleague to carry it into effect, the balloting was postponed.

It had been frequently pressed on the members to order some resolves now on the table, and but very lately passed, respecting points on which the temper of Spain towards us greatly depends, to be forwarded to the commissioner at that court, as

[1] Secret Journals, vol. ii. pp. 130–145, 149–167, 173–189, 201–210. An abstract of these proceedings is to be found in the valuable report lately made for the Treasury Department, by Mr. Sabine, on the American fisheries, pp. 149–151.

[2] According to the secret journal, Mr. Gerry seconded this motion.

[3] This was presented in the shape of an amendment to the original motion.

answers to the questions which he hinted to us in six days after the treaties with France, again on the 2d of April, again plainly and urgently for our answer on August 27th, again more urgently on October 19th, again on December 5th, &c., &c. A cut-and-dried commission, such as must pass hereafter, was produced, moved for, and seconded, *out of order*. A motion was then made and seconded for choosing a *minister* plenipotentiary to do exactly what a *commissioner* is now fully authorized to do; as much so, exactly, as were the three at the Court of France. The pretence for this was the *accepted* second paragraph of a report (vide April 15th), that *ministers* plenipotentiary were only necessary at Versailles and Madrid; the spirit and intent of which paragraph lay in the word *only*, and not in a technical use of *ministers*, as settled by France and us on the arrival of Mr. Gerard. Some good and not *young* men, on this question, saw not the *trap* under the chaff. Who could deny that we have assented to additional parade and expense in a minister above a commissioner? Who could deny that two persons would be in pay, for a time, at once, to do the same business? Who could deny that A. Lee's complete vindications were on the table of Congress? This last matter and all characterizing was said to be *untimely*, as much as in a question about creating a Quartermaster-*General*, when we had a Quartermaster. For that A. Lee stood as fair for *nomination* to the new commission as any man else, and *then* we should be allowed full liberty to speak to character. A majority can thus kill, but it requires *seven* to make alive. But seven thus killed. For Mr. Laurens, though he spoke against the question, voted for it, and then nominated A. Lee. This act of his, in such a desperate case, does not make up for depriving a much injured man of the advantage of showing that he was artfully knocked down by six upon a presumption that seven could not be found to assist in recovering him from the violence of the blow. Mr. J. Adams was also nominated for Spain by Mr. Paca, Mr. J. Jay by Mr. Mercer of Virginia.

This accommodation scheme had been proposed in whispers early in the morning, to provide places for the *two* nominated the day before. One to have a post of the highest honor, and the other to take the post of a man murdered on purpose to make room. Are not these doings a complete appendix to the

report of the committee of thirteen, and the proceedings thereon months ago? Look at the names! Here I must join in an old exclamation of F. L. L., when he had seen a whole day wasted, "What d—d dirty work is this of politics!"

I will now state the votes, remarking that, being Sunday, Mr. McKean was able to attend; but your *sworn friend*, the farmer,[1] will alone finish it. New York is represented by Mr. Jay *and* Mr. Lewis, not by one. New Jersey by Mr. Fell *and* Mr. Houston, Connecticut by Mr. Huntington or Mr. Root.

First ballot.[2]

J. A. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, ... 5

J. J. New York, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, . 4

Second ballot.

J. A. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Pennsylvania, ... 6

J. J. New York, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, New Jersey, ... 5

Vote for a minister for Spain.

Yea: Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, ... 7

Nay: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Delaware, . . 3

Divided: Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, ... 2

JAMES LOVELL TO JOHN ADAMS.

(Confidential.)

Philadelphia, 28 September, 1779.

Yesterday, in whispers, the proposal was made to send J. A. to Spain, the balloting for *that* business being first called for. But Connecticut and Pennsylvania discovered a total abhorrence of the consequences in the second ballot; therefore the plan was dropped, and the ballots were;

A. Lee. New Hampshire.

J. Jay. My colleagues, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Dickinson, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina.

[1] John Dickinson.

[2] These ballots are not given in the journal.

No vote, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, South Carolina.

For the two other commissions, J. A. the only nomination. All the States, but one for Dr. Franklin. If this was not the *piddler*,[1] it might be the *oddity* of Virginia.

Prior to the choice for Spain, I produced your two first letters as appertaining to the only one point which had ever appeared incontestable against A. Lee. "*Je crains M. Lee et ses entours.*"[2] For the minister, disavowing on February 13th his having adopted prejudices such as were attempted to be inspired in America, and proving his disavowal by an appeal to his conduct to you "*ensemble et séparément*," shows either that he meant only *avec ses entours*, or that he felt convinced he had been drawn into unjust doubts, and intended to show double confidence in future.

The whole members, even Jay, praise "my perseverance;" but he says, in "friendship to Arthur." Time will show whether it has not been to prevent Congress from an act of injustice, and to maintain the sacredness of the *approbation or disapprobation* of our united supremacy; which is what the servant of republics should look up to, rather than to salaries and perquisites, which the levity of monarchies makes their servants *catch while they can*, without striving to deserve them.

I am freed from a load; for I have long practised upon David's rule. Away with sackcloth and ashes, when evitables become inevitable. J. J. desires me to be as true to him "only while he continues to do honestly." That I most assuredly will, and to every name that the public choice shall fall on. But I cannot forget the past so far as not to think that if Silas Deane is not stone blind, he may *now* see from what source he got his fund of advice towards measures apparently his own.

Carmichael, Houston, and Mr. Jay's brother, Livingston, are talked of as secretaries to the embassies. Gerry tells me Dana may be induced to go with you.

And now, my very dear Sir, as to the main point. America ought not to pardon you, if you put its peace to the hazard of a second ballot. As an individual, I swear *I never will.* And as to Portia, if I can by my utmost industry find out that only

[1] Dickinson. The allusion is to Mr. Adams's intercepted letter, vol. ii. p. 411, note.

[2] See page 481.

one tear, or even a sigh, comes from her, I will burn all her past letters, much as I now regard them. I will allow her a little regret, if she will not let it amount to a sigh, while she considers with me that you cannot be here to manage the Vermont cause. You must give all possible information to Massachusetts government through some able man or committee, before you go from thence or hence.

I have tired all my pens yesterday and to-day, in conversing with those I love southward and eastward.

Heaven protect you.

JAMES LOVELL.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 29 September, 1779.

MY DEAR MR. ADAMS, — It is with the greatest pleasure that I inform you of the late arrangement of our foreign affairs, in which you are appointed to negotiate the treaties with Great Britain, and our friend, Mr. Dana, to be your secretary. Mr. Jay is to negotiate with Spain, Mr. Carmichael to be his secretary, and Colonel John Laurens, son of the late President Laurens, to be secretary to Dr. Franklin.

I shall not be able at this time to give you a history of the proceedings of Congress relative to their foreign affairs. The embarrassments, difficulties, and delays attending this business, in consequence of the disputes between the late commissioners, have exceeded every thing of the kind which I have before met with. So far have some of their friends in Congress been influenced by attachments and prejudice, as to render it impossible to preserve their friendship and confidence, and, at the same time, to act with becoming freedom and independence.

I flatter myself that you will not hesitate a moment at accepting the highest office of honor and trust under the United States, when elected thereto by the voice of eleven States. Indeed, it may be called unanimous, as there was only a single vote for Dr. Franklin, who was not in nomination, and it is said to have been put in by Delaware, at that time represented by

your old friend, Mr. D.[1] Great exertions were made to send you to Spain, and Mr. Jay on the other embassy; but the opposition of your friends produced from the gentlemen in favor of Mr. Jay, a proposal of accommodation, in consequence whereof he was appointed by eight States. The appointment of Mr. Dana is, in my humble opinion, of the next importance; and should he accept it, he may stand candidate for the next vacancy in Europe.

It is almost time to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favor of the 27th November, 1778, and of the 10th and 11th instant. The first is of so early a date, as not to require an answer, and a prudent use shall be made of the last. Agreeably to your request in the other, I transmit by the bearer the journals of Congress to the present time, as far as they are printed. Those for 1778 are now in the press. With respect to the circumstances of your first appointment, it was in consequence of a nomination, which I intended to make after having endeavored to discover your sentiments on the subject. I remember you were more reserved than I thought you ought to have been; and two of your colleagues then in Yorktown, to whom I proposed the matter, objected to it as not being agreeable to you. When the nomination was made, if I rightly remember, the one that remained in Congress after you left it, expressed his doubts on the occasion;[2] but being determined to try the experiment, I informed the House that I had communicated to you my design of nomination, and that, although you were very silent on the affair, I was fully persuaded you would not decline the duty. This fixed the matter in the minds of your friends. Mr. R. Livingston was nominated by New York, and by recurring to the printed journals you will find the voters in your favor distinguished by dots, vol. iii. p. 547.[3]

[1] Dickinson.

[2] James Lovell.

[3] Mr. Folsom, representing New Hampshire; Messrs. Gerry, Lovell, and Dana, for Massachusetts; Mr. Ellery, for Rhode Island; Messrs. Dyer, Law, and Williams, for Connecticut; Messrs. Morris, Roberdeau, and Clingan, for Pennsylvania; Messrs. R. H. and F. L. Lee and Harvie, three of four from Virginia. Mr. Laurens's name is marked, but at the foot of the page is the following:

"N. B. South Carolina did not vote on the above occasion, but was represented by Mr. Laurens."

Mr. Duane and Mr. Duer, representing New York; Messrs. Smith and Rumsey, for Maryland; Messrs. Penn and Harnett, for North Carolina; Mr. Jones, of Virginia, and Mr. Langworthy, of Georgia, appear to have voted in the minority.

It is some time since this transaction happened, and I may be mistaken in some points, but I further recollect that in conferring with you, I mentioned my former intention of nominating you in the fall of the year 1776, and that Mr. R. H. Lee told me you had informed him that you would not accept the appointment, if made, which last circumstance not being remembered by you, was an additional argument in my mind for pushing your election at Yorktown.

I conceived myself bound by every principle of honor, integrity, and policy, to "vote you clear of suspicions, &c., dishonorable to the State." When the question was proposed for inserting your name in that resolution, I opposed it as unjust, and the inclosed copy of the futile charge against you, and evidence to support it, will, I think, warrant my conduct. If unjust, then surely it was impolitic, as your future usefulness would have been destroyed, for a time at least. I conceived it so, and was therefore bound in honor not to sport with your character. I mean not, however, to throw reflection on the conduct of gentlemen of a different opinion.[1] They probably had a different view of the subject, and may be highly commendable for a measure which it would have been criminal in me to have adopted.

While I am on this subject, give me leave to observe that your letter to Congress, desiring a copy of the charges against you, was yesterday read, on which I moved the House to comply with your request; but it was objected to from several quarters, as an improper measure, since the House had almost unanimously, by your late appointment, rejected the charge, and had in the first instance cleared you of the animosities subsisting among the other commissioners. It was also said, that the admission of weight in the charge was dishonorable to the House, which, in that case, would have been in duty bound to postpone your appointment until you were acquitted of the charge. The objections were agreeable to my mind, and I withdrew the motion, at the same time informing the House that I should furnish you with the papers requested.

Upon the whole, I am of opinion, that, in the esteem of Congress, your character is as high as any gentleman's in America;

[1] S. Adams and James Lovell voted in favor of the motion, for reasons heretofore explained. See page 482 of this volume, and the note.

that as much is obtained in the arrangement and determinations of our foreign affairs as could be expected; that if matters had been driven further, we should have been more deeply involved in animosities and dissensions, and have put a total stop to our foreign negotiations; that in consequence thereof we must, on the return of Monsieur Gerard, have sunk in the esteem of our ally, of the Court of Spain, and of all Europe; that Dr. Franklin ought to be recalled; that, however some late measures may not be equal to our wishes, it becomes our indispensable duty to support them with vigor, and to listen no more to insinuations without evidence to support them; that an able, upright, firm friend to America is greatly injured in Dr. Lee, as well by the impolicy of some of his friends,* as by the undeserved reproach of his enemies; but that, his usefulness being destroyed, had it been practicable to have continued him in office, he could not have served with satisfaction to himself or advantage to the public. I have been well informed, that hints have been thrown out here, relative to my votes for recalling Dr. Lee, which I do not relish. I have, however, suppressed my feelings, because it is extremely injurious to the public interest to have their servants involved in disputes with each other. I shall return prepared to justify my conduct in every point, and should any attempts be made to misrepresent it, I shall be under the necessity of showing that it has been ever directed in Congress by disinterested public motives; that it has been always free from views of extending my personal interest *or influence*, or of supporting *private attachments;* and I think I can answer for the policy of the measures which I have adopted.

Perhaps you may think this deviating from delicacy; but, conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, I cannot bear the breath of reflection. I voted for the recall of all the commissioners included in the resolution of the 20th of April last, as an indispensable obligation arising from the resolution itself, and also, as a preliminary measure for fully inquiring into the conduct of those gentlemen, that the character of each may be fairly known and represented to the public. The States divided

* I am informed, and I think from the best authority, that a resignation of Mr. Lee's, conceived in terms that would do honor to any man on earth, has been in the hands of a friend of his in Congress, and suppressed two months, by which means he has been prevented from avoiding a supersedure. *Note by Mr. Gerry.*

on Dr. Lee, and he was continued in office, contrary, in my opinion, to every principle of government, where a majority is to rule. This happened by the mode in which the question was put, "shall he be recalled," instead of "shall he be continued." In the latter case, a division would have lost the question, and he would have been recalled, which the States, who were against him, being apprised of, conceived the matter, as it stood, both unreasonable and unfair. After Congress had finished their instructions relative to negotiations, a question arose, who should execute them. Reference being then made to a resolution of the 15th of April last, "that ministers plenipotentiary for these States are only necessary for the present, at the Courts of Versailles and Madrid," a motion was made, that "a minister plenipotentiary, in lieu of a commissioner, be appointed to negotiate a treaty of alliance, and unity, and commerce, between the United States of America and his Catholic Majesty," and the question was carried as follows: six ayes, one no, and four divided. Massachusetts was amongst the latter; Mr. Holten and myself, ayes; Mr. Lovell and Mr. Partridge, no. I thought it necessary to agree to this proposition, as it was consonant to the resolution of the 15th of April; as it would give the States a fair opportunity of electing their ministers, and thereby of correcting the error mentioned; as a decision of the question in the negative would have postponed a negotiation with Spain, and for some reasons before mentioned, and others with which I shall not trouble you. To convince you of the necessity of this last measure, I need only inform you, that, before the resolution was proposed, Congress endeavored to appoint a minister to negotiate the peace, and failed in the attempt, there being six States for yourself, five for Mr. Jay, and one divided. Those who were for Mr. Jay then declared they would never alter their votes, unless they had a fair opportunity of electing a minister for Spain, and accommodating matters to the sense of a majority of the States, which was prevented by the failure of a vote of the States when divided.

One word with respect to your instructions. Pray give me your opinion on the boundaries of the Massachusetts Bay, and if any thing is amiss, Mr. Samuel Adams, if he thinks it expedient, may inform the State thereof, that they may give directions for having it rectified in Congress.

Cannot you attend to the settlement of the Vermont affair on the 1st of February next, agreeably to certain resolutions sent to Massachusetts, which, by her delegates, has claimed a right to the jurisdiction of those lands?

I should not have troubled you with such a volume of small politics, did I not conceive it impracticable to weary the patience of a great politician. My best respects to Portia; her irony is, by sovereign power, turned into fact. I wish that our friend, General Warren, may peruse this letter, and no other person at present, as it may otherwise be the cause of my commencing disputes which I wish to avoid. Brother Dana may correct my information relative to your first election. Adieu, my dear friend, with assurance of sincerity in your very humble servant,

E. GERRY.

Is not caution necessary in sending letters or papers, which on certain occasions ought not to be communicated? It sometimes happens that one friend is nearly sacrificed to support another. I was on a committee which reported three thousand pounds sterling per year for each of the ministers, and one thousand pounds sterling per annum for each of their secretaries, the salary to begin and end as prescribed by a former resolution, relative to the commissioners; but I expect a reduction of the first sum will be made by some of our patriots. I am in favor of £2500 for the first, and of half that sum for the secretaries.

HENRY LAURENS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 4 October, 1779.

The receipt and perusal of your favor of the 10th ultimo afforded me a very high satisfaction. The answer with which you honored my letter of May, 1778, has not yet reached me.

From the earliest intelligence of your return to America, I felt a strong disposition to wait on you with a line or two of sincere congratulation on your happy return to your family and American friends; but there were certain irresistible pull-backs

to the intended operation. I am not addicted to commonplace ceremony, and I perceived it extremely difficult to compose a palatable address of blended gratulation and condolence to an exauctorated fellow-citizen, who had deserved well of his country, and who, at the same time, stood in the most awkward situation that an honest, susceptible mind can be reduced to. Sent, without his own desire, and probably inconsistently with his interest and inclination, on an embassy beyond the Atlantic, kept unemployed, and in the course of a few months virtually dismissed, without censure or applause, and without the least intimation when or in what manner he was to return and report his proceedings; from these and other considerations I found myself constrained to wait future events. These, though a little clumsily brought forth, have happened as I wished; and now, my dear Sir, I not only congratulate you on a safe return, but I have another opportunity of rejoicing with my countrymen on the judicious choice which Congress have made in their late election of a minister plenipotentiary to treat — in *due time*, be it understood — with his Britannic Majesty on peace and commerce. The determination of Congress in this instance will be grateful to the people of these States, and may expiate the queernesses of some of the queerest fellows that ever were invested with rays of sovereignty. Let me entreat you, Sir, for my country's sake, to accept the appointment without hesitation or retrospection; you know "whereof we are made." Wisdom and patriotism forbid exceptions on account of past circumstances. I speak in pure truth and sincerity, and will not risk offence by uttering a word respecting your fitness, or peculiar or exclusive fitness for the important office; but I will venture to add, it is necessary you should accept and stand ready to execute it. Your determination to do so will make the true friends of American independence happy, and will abate their apprehensions from incompetency or negligence in other quarters. Not that I believe you will be directly the object of negotiation; the pride of our haughty enemy will lead him to manœuvre by mediation, and my ideas teach me to suppose you are for some time to remain behind the curtain; but the moment cannot be far distant, according to present appearances, when you will step on the stage, and act a part productive of substantial good to your country, of honorable fame to your-

self and to your posterity. My prayers and good wishes for your success will be accompanied by the utmost exertions of my feeble powers to insure it.

I pay no regard to the slanders of stockjobbers, monopolists, nor any of the various tribes and classes of the enemies of our peace. It gives me some satisfaction, however, to know that better men think well of me; but I draw an infinitely more solid consolation from this knowledge, that I have uniformly striven to persevere faithfully and disinterestedly in the service of my country. This well-founded assurance will in every event, however untoward, calm the mind, and secure that peace, which neither the great nor the little world can give or rob me of. I have now no hope of embracing you corporeally on this or the other continent to which you are going; but as a good citizen, and fellow-laborer in the common cause, my heart will embrace you at whatever distance we may be from each other. Be this as it shall happen, should we be permitted to come within reach, I tell you plainly, and I know you will not be displeased, I shall prefer shaking hands in the old American style.

Should I be detained in Congress the ensuing winter, I mean to ask leave in the spring to visit Massachusetts and New Hampshire, as one of the last of my terrestrial peregrinations. That journey finished, I hope the times will give me leave to withdraw and learn to die, a science I most devoutly wish to enter upon with a sedulousness which the present day prohibits.

Commodore Gillon's ill success in France may possibly abate a little of his fervor for accomplishing every thing by the force of his own powers. His expenses being fruitless, will make no inconsiderable deduction from our Carolina finances, and I am sorry to hear that when he returns to Charleston, he will be asked unpleasant questions respecting his general conduct, and Don Juan de Miralles complains heavily of one of his transactions at Havana. These are things of no immediate concern to you, nor would it be instructive to say, it is difficult to judge of men from appearances.

I wish I had time to speak of the awful state of our national debt and credit: the field is too wide for the compass of a letter; but believe me, Sir, while we are decorating our fabric, we are censurably careless of the foundation. Censure, if ever it comes,

will not light wholly on those whom the pious Duffield calls "the great council of these States." Each State, at too late a day, will find cause to apply blame to itself. We are at this moment on the brink of a precipice, and what I have long dreaded and often intimated to my friends, seems to be breaking forth — a convulsion among the people. Yesterday produced a bloody scene in the streets of this city;[1] the particulars you will probably learn from other friends; and from circumstances which have come to my knowledge this morning, there are grounds for apprehending much more confusion. The enemy has been industriously sapping our fort, and we, gazing and frolicking; peradventure we, meaning every State, may improve the present alarm to good purpose; but what shall we do by and by, and not far distant, for quieting a hungry and naked army? Shall we call forth a grand convention in aid of the great council? This may become absolutely necessary.

I will presume on your kindness and friendship to trouble you by the next post with a packet for my friends in Europe, and no further in the mean time, but to subscribe with great truth, dear Sir, your faithful, obliged, and affectionate friend and servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Braintree, 17 October, 1779.

And what, my dear sir, shall I say to your favors of the 27th and 28th of September, which came by the last post? The unanimity of my election surprises me, as much as the delicacy, importance, and danger of the trust distress me. The appointment of Mr. Dana to be Secretary pleases me more than my own to be minister, commissioner, negotiator, call it what you will. I have communicated to him your letters in confidence, and all other material intelligence I had, and hope he will not decline; but you know the peculiarities of his situation, and if he should refuse, I hope you will not force your name out of nomination again. I did not suppose that such characters

[1] This alludes to the "Fort Wilson riot," a full account of which is given in Reed's *Life of Reed*, vol. ii. pp. 149 – 152, and in the Appendix.

would be willing to go as secretaries, because I did not know your plan, otherwise I should not have mentioned Mr. Jenings to Mr. Gerry for one to Dr. Franklin. Your mastery of the language, and your indefatigability, would make you infinitely useful in any of these departments.

I rejoice that you produced my letter to the Count de Vergennes and his answer, before the choice, because it contained a testimony in favor of Mr. Lee, which was his due.[1] I am very much affected at his recall, because I know his merit, and, therefore, I am glad I was not placed in his stead; for suspicions would have arisen, and reflections would have been cast upon me, as having favored his removal in order to make room, which I certainly did not. I am infinitely obliged to you for these letters, and for that received the post before last; but I really tremble for your health. Let me entreat you, for the sake of our country, to take care of it. If I was to apply myself, as you do, I should soon go to study politics in another sphere. Yet I am so selfish as to beg the continuance of your favors to me, and I pledge myself to you, I will not be in debt any more than may be made by the intrinsic difference in the value of the letters, which will be unavoidable.

Thank you for the extract from Mr. Izard's letter. I am not a little surprised at its contents. It was written, I see, to his friend, and I suppose intended in confidence. I am fully persuaded he did not intend that the whole should have been laid before Congress.[2] I utterly deny that I ever used to him any such language as the indecent paragraph that closes what he says about me. Indeed, that is manifestly his own inference, and in his own words, from what he says he had heard me say, and he draws the same from what Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane had said upon the same subject. I further deny that I ever *threatened* him with the displeasure of Congress, for writing his opinion concerning these articles to Congress, or for suggesting them to the commissioners. But to enter into all the conversations that have passed between Mr. Izard and me respecting those articles, and many other points, in order to give a full and fair representation of those conversations, would fill a small volume. Yet, there never was any angry or rude conversation

[1] See vol. vii. pp. 79, 80.

[2] See the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, vol. ii. p. 434.

between him and me, that I can recollect. I lived with him on good terms, visited him and he me, dined with his family, and his family with me, and I ever told him, and repeated it often, that I should be always obliged to him for his advice, opinions, and sentiments upon any American subject, and that I should always give it its due weight, although I did not think myself bound to follow it any further than it seemed to me to be just. As Congress have declined giving me the charges against me by their authority, and have, upon the whole, acquitted me with so much splendor, it would look like a littleness of soul in me to make myself anxious, or give them any further trouble about it. And as I have in general so good an opinion of Mr. Izard's attachment to his country, and of his honor, I shall not think myself bound to take any further notice of this fruit of his inexperience in public life, this peevish ebullition of the rashness of his temper. I have written a few other observations to Mr. Gerry on the same subject. You and he will compare these with them for your private satisfaction, but be sure that they are not exposed where they will do harm to the public, to Mr. Izard, or me, unnecessarily.

If I should go abroad, cannot you lend me twenty or thirty complete sets of the journals? They are much wanted in Europe. A set of them is a genteel present, and perhaps would do me and the public more service than you are aware of. If Congress, or some committee, would order it, I should be very glad.

TO JAMES LOVELL.

Braintree, 25 October, 1779.

Mr. Joshua Johnson is a merchant, settled with his lady and family at Nantes. I was honored with many of his civilities in that city, and with a good deal of his conversation. He is a sensible, genteel man, has a good character, and, I believe, is as well qualified for the service you mention as any American now in Europe. His affections, sentiments, and acquaintances are supposed to be on a particular side; but I believe his conduct has been prudent and unexceptionable.

The French frigate would be as agreeable a conveyance for me as I wish. I should be very sorry to delay her. I do not expect to have much direct negotiation for some time; but I do expect a great deal of indirect, round-about, and very ridiculous manœuvring. If I go at all, I had rather go without delay, because I hate a state of suspense, and in my present situation I can engage in no other business, public or private. I was running fast into my old profession; but this will put a total stop to it, for, being uncertain when I shall go, I cannot undertake any man's business and give him my word to go through with it.

If Dana should not go, you will find that Bancroft will be set up; but I think you would certainly carry it, and you may depend upon it, no man would make me happier. Dana, however, will accept. He spent yesterday with me, and I am persuaded he will go.

I will inform A. L. by the first opportunity. He cannot be delayed.[1] He not only had power to borrow money, but has, I believe, considerable sums in his hands from Spain. Spain has sent him from time to time large sums, and she will continue to supply Mr. Jay, so that he will have no trouble. I shall be in a different predicament. You are mistaken about the English. There is no money to be got there; small sums may be borrowed in France or in Amsterdam. So that I wish to be furnished with full powers to borrow. But I beg one favor more, and that is for an order to draw, in case of necessity and in case other resources fail, on Dr. Franklin or on the banker of the United States, for a sum not exceeding my salary yearly, and also for a resolution of Congress, or a letter from the commercial committee, requesting the continental agents in Europe and America to furnish me aids and supplies of cash, &c., and to the captains of all American frigates to afford me a passage out or home upon demand, so as not to interfere with other orders they may have, however, or prevent their cruising, I to pay for my passage to Congress, or be accountable for it. Mr. Dana should have the same resolution of Congress, and letter from the commercial

[1] Mr. Lovell had written thus: —

"Pray miss no possible chance to inform A. L." (Arthur Lee) "of what has happened. It may reach him before an authenticated account by Mr. Jay, and be a warning to take his measures. He can have no accounts to cause delay; and as he has power to borrow money, he cannot be obliged to apply to F—."

and marine committee, one from each for each of us, and perhaps the same to Mr. Jay and Mr. Carmichael. I hope I shall find the funds provided for me sufficient; but if I should not, I may be in the utmost distress, and bring upon myself and you disgrace. Franklin will supply me, and so will any agent in France, if they have a resolution of Congress, or even a letter from the commercial committee.

I do not know what indecencies you mean in my commission. I have looked it up, and have it before me. It is on a large sheet of paper, written very well, all in the handwriting of our much respected secretary, signed by President Laurens, sealed with his seal, and attested by the secretary. It is not upon vellum, nor parchment, it is true, and the paper is not the best, but I believe as good as any we had at that time. Upon the whole, I think it a very decent, respectable, and honorable commission. It was treated with great respect at Versailles, and I see no reason to object to it. Pray let me know what the question is about it.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Braintree, 25 October, 1779.

My dear Sir, — Your favor of the 4th of this month gave me great pleasure; but I am afraid that you and some others of my friends felt more for me in the awkward situation you mention than I did for myself, though I cannot say that I was wholly insensible. I could not help laughing a little, at the figure I cut, to be sure. I could compare it to nothing but Shakspeare's idea of Ariel, wedged by the waist in the middle of a rifted oak, for I was sufficiently sensible that it was owing to an unhappy division in Congress, and pains enough were taken to inform me, that one side were for sending me to Spain and the other to Holland, so that I was flattered to find that

[1] Mr. Lovell's style is always enigmatical, and indicative of his eccentric mind. The following is the passage alluded to: —

"You will have a decent commission *this time*. I wish I could see your old one; as do the secretary and Mr. Laurens, between whom there have been formal proceedings *in-doors* respecting some indecencies of the former."

Mr. Adams sailed for Europe before this letter could receive an answer.

neither side had any decisive objection against trusting me, and that the apparent question was only *where*. But I assure you, that all my sprawling, wriggling, and brandishing my legs and arms in the air, like Ariel, never gave me half the pain, that the picture of Congress excited at that time in my imagination. When I saw a certain *appeal to the people*, that no animadversion was made on it, that you resigned, &c., Congress appeared to me to resemble a picture in the gallery of the Count de Vergennes, and I trembled for the union and safety of the States. The picture is of a coach, with four horses running down a steep mountain and rushing on to the middle of a very high bridge over a very large river. The foundations of the bridge give way, and the carriage, the horses, the timbers, stones, and all, in a chaos are falling through the air down to the water. The horror of the horses, the coachman, the footmen, the gentlemen and ladies in the carriage, are strongly painted in their countenances and gestures, as well as the sympathy and terror in those of persons at a distance in boats upon the river, and many others on the shore on each side of the river.

That I was sent without the least solicitation of mine, directly or indirectly, is certainly true; and I had such formidable ideas of the sea and of British men-of-war, such diffidence in my own qualifications to do service in that way, and such uncertainty of the reception I should meet, that I had little inclination to adventure. That I went against my interest is most undoubtedly so, for I never yet served the public without losing by it. I was not, however, as you suppose, kept unemployed. I had business enough to do, as I could easily convince you. There is a great field of business there, and I could easily show you that I did my share of it. There is so much to do, and so much difficulty to do it well, that I am rejoiced to find a gentleman of such abilities, principles, and activity, as Colonel Laurens undoubtedly is, without a compliment, appointed to assist in it.[1] I most sincerely hope for his friendship, and an entire harmony with him, for which reason I should be very happy in his company in the passage, or in an interview with him as soon as possible in Europe. He will be in a delicate situation, but not so much so as I was; and plain sense, honest intentions, and

[1] Colonel John Laurens had been made Secretary to the minister plenipotentiary in France.

common civility will, I think, be sufficient to secure him, and do much good.

Your kind compliments on my safe return and most honorable reëlection are very obliging. I have received no commission, nor instructions, nor any particular information of the plan; but from the advice and information from you and several other of my friends at Philadelphia and here, I shall make no hesitation to say, that, notwithstanding the delicacy and danger of this commission, I suppose I shall accept it without delay and trust events to Heaven, as I have been long used to do. It is a pain to me to be deprived of the pleasure of shaking hands with you at the foot of Penn's hill, eleven miles from Boston, where lives a lady however, who desires me to present her best respects, and ask the favor of a visit when you come to Boston, that she may have an opportunity of seeing a gentleman whose unshaken constancy does so much honor and such essential service to his country.

The convulsions at Philadelphia are very affecting and alarming, but not entirely unexpected to me. The state of parties and the nature of their government have a long time given me disagreeable apprehensions. But I hope they will find some remedy. Methods will be found to feed the army, but I know of none to clothe it without convoys to trade, which Congress, I think, will do well to undertake, and persuade France and Spain to undertake, as soon as possible. Your packets for your friends in Europe will give me pleasure, and shall be forwarded with care and despatch.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Braintree, 4 November, 1779.

Yours of October 12th has been seven days by me. Am happy to learn my accounts and vouchers arrived safe by Mr. Lowell. I know not how the Board will explain the three months after notice of recall, as applied to me. If they were to allow three months after my arrival, it would be no more than just. Mr. Dana, I presume, will accept, and sail with me in a few days.

I am clear for three branches in the legislature, and the committee have reported as much, though awkwardly expressed. I have considered this question in every light in which my understanding is capable of placing it, and my opinion is decided in favor of three branches; and being very unexpectedly called upon to give my advice to my countrymen concerning a form of government, I could not answer it to myself, to them, or posterity, if I concealed or disguised my real sentiments.[1] They have been received with candor, but perhaps will not be adopted. In such a State as this, however, I am persuaded we never shall have any stability, dignity, decision, or liberty without it. We have so many men of wealth, of ambitious spirits, of intrigue, of luxury and corruption, that incessant factions will disturb our peace without it, and, indeed, there is too much reason to fear, with it. The executive, which ought to be the reservoir of wisdom, as the legislative is of liberty, without this weapon of defence,[2] will be run down like a hare before the hunters. But I have not time to enlarge.

I am more solicitous about the means of procuring the salary you mention than the sum of it. I can make it do, if I can get it. But I wish I had power to borrow money, and also power to draw upon Dr. Franklin, or the American banker, in case of necessity. I should get it in that way. Mr. Jay will have no difficulty, for Spain will undoubtedly furnish him, as they did Mr. Lee, who, I believe, but am not certain, has some Spanish money remaining in his hands. I know not how much, and may be mistaken in supposing he has any.

You think my appointment ought not to be divulged; but it was public in Boston and in every body's mouth upon 'Change, before I heard a lisp of it. If it is generally approved, I am happy. Happy and blessed indeed shall I be, if I can accomplish my errand, and give general satisfaction in the end!

Let me beseech you, by every feeling of friendship as well as patriotism, to continue your favors, and transmit me the journals, newspapers, pamphlets, as well as your advice, from time to time. My importance in that country will depend much upon the intelligence that shall be sent me by my friends, more

[1] This allusion is to the speech made soon after the opening of the convention of Massachusetts, by Mr. Adams, and spoken of by Dr. Gordon and Judge Dawes, but no trace of which is preserved. See vol. iv. p. 216, note.

[2] A negative upon the laws. See vol. iv. p. 231, note.

than you can imagine. If you intend I shall do you any good, keep me constantly informed of every thing; the numbers and destinations of the army, the state of finance, the temper of the people, military operations; the state and the prospects of the harvests, the prices of goods, the price of bills of exchange, the rate between silver and paper. Nothing can come amiss. The growth or decline of the navy, the spirit and success of privateers, the number of prizes, the number, position, exertions, and designs of the enemy.

Your election comes on this month, and it is sure. I wish I was as sure of getting safe to France.

God bless you!

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Braintree, 4 November, 1779.

Your favors of October 12th and 19th are before me. I should not have left the first unanswered seven days, if it had not been for my new trade of a Constitution monger. I inclose a pamphlet as my apology. It is only a report of a committee, and will be greatly altered, no doubt. If the committee had boldly made the legislature consist of three branches, I should have been better pleased. But I cannot enlarge upon this subject.

I am pained in my inmost soul at the unhappy affair at Colonel Wilson's house. I think there ought to be an article in the declaration of rights of every State, securing freedom of speech, impartiality, and independence at the bar. There is nothing on which the rights of every member of society more depend. There is no man so bad but he ought to have a fair trial, and an equal chance to obtain the ablest counsel, or the advocate of his choice, to see that he has fair play, and the benefit of truth and law.

Do not be discouraged, you will yet find liberty a charming substance. I wish I had Leonidas.[1] Cannot you send it after me? Thank you for your congratulations on my new and

[1] An article signed with this name, written by Dr. Rush, and published in Dunlap's paper at Philadelphia.

most honorable appointment; honorable indeed, if it is possible for mortals to honor mortals. I am honored with an honor, however, that makes me tremble. Pray help me, by corresponding constantly with me, and sending me all the pamphlets, journals, news, &c., to a little success as well as honor.

Your congratulations on the Count d'Estaing's operations are conceived in terms flattering enough. I will please myself with the thought that I had some share in bringing him here. If he only liberates Georgia and Rhode Island, which is already done, it is a great success; but I promise you, although I go to make peace, yet, if the old lady Britannia will not let me do that, I will do all I can in character to sustain the war, and direct it in a sure course. I must be prudent in this, however, which I fear is not enough my characteristic; but I flatter myself I am rather growing in this grace. And in this spirit I think, that although we have had provocations enough to excite the warmest passions against Great Britain, yet it is both our duty to silence all resentments in our deliberations about peace, and attend only to our interests and our engagements with our allies.

Nothing ever gives me so much pleasure as to hear of harmony in Congress. Upon this depend our union, strength, prosperity, and glory. If the late appointments give satisfaction, I am happy, and if the liberties and independence of our country are not safe in my hands, you may swear it is for want of brains and not of heart. The appointment of Mr. Dana could not be mended. He will go, and I shall be happy. You have given me pain by your account of the complaints against the director.[1] I am sorry, very sorry!

What will you say, if I should turn your thoughts from politics to philosophy? What do you think of Dr. Franklin's theory of colds? He is fixed in the opinion that we never take cold from the cold air, and wants the experiments of Sanctorius tried over again. Suppose you should make a statical chair, and try whether perspiration is most copious in a warm bed, or stark naked in the open air. I assure you, these branches of physics come within the circle of the sciences of the statesman; for an unlucky cold, which I have been much subject to all my

[1] Of the Hospitals. The allusion is to Dr. Shippen, and to the difficulties that took place between him and Dr. Morgan.

days, may stop him in his career, and dash all his schemes; and it is a poor excuse to say he foresaw and provided against every event but his own sickness.

My partner, whose tender health and numerous family will not permit her to make me as happy as Mr. Jay, joins with me in the kindest compliments to you and Mrs. Rush. Adieu!

TO EDMUND JENINGS.

Amsterdam, 23 September, 1780.

I have received your favor, written after your return from Spa, and am very glad you had so pleasant a tour, and found so agreeable a reception.

I find that my friend in Philadelphia reprinted the letters on the spirit and resources of Great Britain, after which they were again printed in Boston, and much admired. A gentleman from Boston tells me he heard there that they were written by one Mr. Jenings. I wish his countrymen knew more than they do about that same Mr. Jenings.

I take a vast satisfaction in the general approbation of the Massachusetts Constitution. If the people are as wise and honest in the choice of their rulers as they have been in framing a government, they will be happy, and I shall die content with the prospect for my children, who, if they cannot be well under such a form and such an administration, will not deserve to be at all.

I wish the translation might appear as soon as possible, because it may have some effects here.[1] It certainly will; for there are many persons here attentive to such things in English, whether in pamphlets or newspapers. I wish it was published in a pamphlet, and I could get a dozen of them. I begin to be more fond of propagating things in English, because the people, the most attentive to our affairs, read English, and I wish to increase the curiosity after that language and the students in it. You must know I have undertaken to prophesy that English will be the most respectable language in the world, and the

[1] A translation into French of Governor Pownall's *Memorial to the Sovereigns of Europe*. See vol. vii. p. 248, note.

most universally read and spoken, in the next century, if not before the close of this. American population will in the next age produce a greater number of persons who will speak English than any other language, and these persons will have more general acquaintance and conversation with all other nations than any other people, which will naturally introduce their language everywhere, as the general medium of correspondence and conversation among the learned of all nations, and among all travellers and strangers, as Latin was in the last century, and French has been in this. Let us, then, encourage and advise every body to study English.

I have written to Congress a serious request, that they would appoint an academy for refining, correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English language.[1] After Congress shall have done it, perhaps the British king and parliament may have the honor of copying the example. This I should admire. England will never have any more honor, excepting now and then that of imitating the Americans.

I assure you, Sir, I am not altogether in jest. I see a general inclination after English in France, Spain, and Holland, and it may extend throughout Europe. The population and commerce of America will force their language into general use.

TO JONATHAN JACKSON.

Amsterdam, 2 October, 1780.

I have long had it in contemplation to pay my respects to you, but a wandering life and various avocations have hitherto prevented.

I am very happy to find that our labors in convention were not in vain. The Constitution, as finished by the convention and accepted by the people, is publishing in all the public papers of Europe, the report of the committee having been published before. Both have been treated with much respect both in Europe and in the other States of America. The noble simplicity of your address to the people is much admired. The

[1] See vol. vii. p. 249.

substitute for the Governor's negative is generally thought an amelioration, and I must confess it is so widely guarded that it has quite reconciled me.

I want to hear of the elections. If these are made with as much gravity, sobriety, wisdom, and integrity as were discovered in the convention and among the people, in the whole course of this great work, posterity will be happy and prosperous. The first citizen will be one of two whom we know. Whichever it may be, I wish him support and success. It is no light trust. However ambitious any may be of it, whoever obtains this distinction, if he does his duty, will find it a heavy burden. There are, however, other great trusts. The Governor's office will be rendered more or less useful, according to the characters that compose the Senate and the Council. If the people are as prudent in the choice of these as they were in the choice of the convention, let the Governor be almost what he will, he will not be able to do much harm; he will be necessitated to do right.

There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader, and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution. We cannot have a bad Governor at present. We may not possibly have the best that might be found, but we shall have a good one; one who means to do no evil to his country, but as much good as he can.

The convention I shall ever recollect with veneration. Among other things, for bringing me acquainted with several characters that I knew little of before, of which number Mr. Jackson is one. I shall be much honored, Sir, if you would be so good as to write me the state of things. There are more opportunities from your port to Spain and Holland, I think, than from any other.

TO JAMES WARREN.

The Hague, 17 June, 1782.

Broken to pieces and worn out with the diseases engendered by the tainted atmosphere of Amsterdam operating upon the

effects of fatiguing journeys, dangerous voyages, a variety of climates, and eternal anxiety of mind, I have not been able to write you so often as I wished; but now I hope the fine season and the pure air of the Hague will restore me. Perhaps you will say that the air of a Court is as putrid as that of Amsterdam. In a moral and political sense, perhaps; but I am determined that the bad morals and false politics of other people shall no longer affect my repose of mind nor disturb my physical constitution. What is it to me, after having done all I can to set them right, whether other people go to heaven or to the devil? I may howl and weep, but this will have no effect. I may then just as well sing and laugh.

Pray, how do you like your new allies the Dutch? Does your imagination rove into futurity, and speculate and combine as it used to do? It is a pretty amusement to play a game with nations as if they were fox and geese, or coins upon a checker-board, or the personages at chess, is it not? It is, however, the real employment of a statesman to play such a game sometimes; a sublime one, truly; enough to make a man serious, however addicted to sport. Politics are the divine science, after all. How is it possible that any man should ever think of making it subservient to his own little passions and mean private interests? Ye baseborn sons of fallen Adam, is the end of politics a fortune, a family, a gilded coach, a train of horses, and a troop of livery servants, balls at Court, splendid dinners and suppers? Yet the divine science of politics is at length in Europe reduced to a mechanical system composed of these materials. What says the muse, Mrs. Warren?

What is to become of an independent statesman, one who will bow the knee to no idol, who will worship nothing as a divinity but truth, virtue, and his country? I will tell you; he will be regarded more by posterity than those who worship hounds and horses; and although he will not make his own fortune, he will make the fortune of his country. The liberties of Corsica, Sweden, and Geneva may be overturned, but neither his character can be hurt, nor his exertions rendered ineffectual. Oh peace! when wilt thou permit me to visit Penns-hill, Milton-hill, and all the blue hills? I love every tree and every rock upon all those mountains. Roving among these, and the quails, partridges, squirrels, &c., that inhabit them, shall be the amuse-

ment of my declining years. God willing, I will not go to Vermont.[1] I must be within the scent of the sea.

I hope to send along a treaty in two or three months. I love the Dutchmen with all their faults. There is a strong spirit of liberty among them, and many excellent qualities. Next year their navy will be so strong as to be able to do a great deal. They may do something this.

I am going to Court to sup with princes, princesses, and ambassadors. I had rather sup with you at one of our hills, though I have no objection to supping at Court. Adieu!

TO JAMES WARREN.

The Hague, 6 September, 1782.

Dear Sir, — I thank you for the papers and your card of July 22d. The letters inclosed I shall send along. My friends have all become as tender of me as you are, and, to save me trouble, send me no letters, so I know nothing about you. I hope you have not been all sick, as I have been. I hope you have not all quite so much business as I have to do. At least, I hope it is to better effect, and to more profit both public and private. To negotiate a loan of money, to sign the obligations for it, to make a thousand visits, some idle, some not idle, all necessary, to write treaties in English, and be obliged to have them translated into French and Dutch, and to reason and discuss every article to — to — to — to — to — &c., &c., &c., is too much for my patience and strength. My correspondence with Congress and their ministers in Europe is a great deal of work; in short, I am weary, and nobody pities me. Nobody seems to know any thing about me. Nobody knows that I do any thing or have any thing to do. One thing, thank God, is certain. I have planted the American standard at the Hague. There let it wave and fly in triumph over Sir Joseph Yorke and British pride. I shall look down upon the flagstaff with pleasure from the other world.

[1] Mrs. Adams during his absence had purchased wild lands in Vermont, and had suggested a removal at some future time.

Not the declaration of American independence, not the Massachusetts Constitution, not the alliance with France, ever gave me more satisfaction or more pleasing prospects for our country than this event. It is a pledge against friends and enemies. It is an eternal barrier against all dangers from the house of Bourbon as well as a present security against England. Perhaps every imagination does not rove into futurity as much as mine, nor care so much about it.

TO JONATHAN JACKSON.

Paris, 17 November, 1782.

Sir, — Upon my arrival here, I found Mr. Jay in very delicate health, in the midst of great affairs, and without a clerk. He told me he had scarcely strength to draw up a state of the negotiation hitherto, but that he must do it for Congress. I offered him the assistance that Mr. Thaxter could afford him in copying, which he accepted.

Mr. Jay, as well as Dr. Franklin and myself, are exceedingly embarrassed by some of our instructions. The other gentlemen will speak for themselves.

No man has a higher sense than I have of the obligation of instructions given by the principal to a deputy. It is a point of duty to observe them. A French minister has only to ascend a pair of stairs to propose a doubt, to offer reasons, to lay open facts for the advice or the orders of his master and his councils; a Spanish, Dutch, or English ambassador has only to send a courier, and receive an answer in a few days. But we are at a vast distance. Despatches are opened, vessels are taken, and the difficulties of communication are innumerable. Facts, unknown when instructions were given, turn up; whole systems of policy appear in a striking light, which were not suspected. Yet the time presses, all Europe waits, and we must act. In such a case, I know of no other rule than to construe instructions, as we do all other precepts and maxims, by such limitations, restrictions, and exceptions, as reason, necessity, and the nature of things point out.

When I speak of this Court, I know not that any other minister is included but that of foreign affairs. A whole system of policy is now as glaring as the day, which, perhaps, Congress and the people of America have little suspicion of. The evidence now results from a large view of all our European negotiations. The same principle and the same system has been uniformly pursued from the beginning of my knowledge of our affairs in Europe, in April, 1778, to this hour; it has been pursued in France, in Spain, in Holland, in Russia, and even in England. In substance it has been this; in assistance afforded us in naval force and in money, to keep us from succumbing, and nothing more; to prevent us from ridding ourselves wholly of our enemies; to prevent us from growing powerful or rich; to prevent us from obtaining acknowledgments of our independence by other foreign powers, and to prevent us from obtaining consideration in Europe, or any advantage in the peace but what is expressly stipulated in the treaty; to deprive us of the grand fishery, the Mississippi River, the western lands, and to saddle us with the tories. To this end, by all I have learned of Mr. Dana's negotiations in Russia, Mr. Jay's in Spain, and my own in Holland, it is evident to me that the Comte de Montmorin, the Marquis de Verac, and the Duke de la Vauguyon, have been governed by the same instructions; to wit, instead of favoring, to prevent, if possible, our success. In Holland, I can speak with knowledge, and I declare that he did every thing in his power to prevent me, and that I verily believe he had instructions so to do, perhaps only from the minister, until I had declared to him, that no advice of his, or the Comte de Vergennes, nor even a requisition from the king should restrain me; and, when he found that I was a man not to be managed, that I was determined, and was as good as my word, and, further, thought I should succeed, he fell in with me, in order to give the air of French influence to measures that French influence never could have accomplished, and which, he thought, would be carried, even if he opposed them. This instance is the stronger, as the Duke is an excellent character, and the man I wish to meet everywhere in the affairs of France and America.

I must go further, and say that the least appearance of an independent spirit in any American minister has been uniformly

cause enough to have his character attacked. Luckily, Mr. Deane out of the question, every American minister in Europe, except Dr. Franklin, has discovered a judgment, a conscience, and a resolution of his own, and, of consequence, every minister that has ever come, has been frowned upon. On the contrary, Dr. Franklin, who has been pliant and submissive in every thing, has been constantly cried up to the stars, without doing any thing to deserve it.

These facts may alarm Congress more than they ought. There is nothing to fear but the want of firmness in Congress. French policy is so subtle, penetrating, and enervating a thing, that the only way to oppose it, is to be steady, patient, and determined. Poland and Sweden, as well as Corsica and Geneva, exhibit horrid effects of this policy, because it was yielded to; whereas Switzerland, who never was afraid of France, and was always firm, has found her an excellent ally for one hundred and fifty years. If we are steadily supported by Congress, we will go clearly to the windward of them; but if Congress wavers and gives way, the United States will receive a blow that they will not recover in fifty years.

The affair of the refugees, I think, will divide us from the English at present, and precisely because the English are encouraged to insist upon a compensation by this Court; if it depended on my vote, I would cut this knot at once. I would compensate the wretches, how little soever they deserve it, nay, how much soever they deserve the contrary. I foresee we shall be prevented by it from agreeing with Britain now, and be intrigued into the measure at last, and that by this Court.

We have nothing to fear from this Court but in the particulars above mentioned. The alliance is too necessary to them, we are too essential to them, for them to violate the treaties, or finally disgust and alienate us. But they have not known, any more than England, the men with whom they have to do. A man and his office were never better united than Mr. Jay and the commission for peace. Had he been detained in Madrid, as I was in Holland, and all left to Franklin, as was wished, all would have been lost. If he is not supported in Congress, we will both come home together, and see if we cannot have better luck by word of mouth than we have had by letter, to convince our countrymen. The thanks of Congress ought, in sound

policy and in perfect justice, to be given to Mr. Jay for his able and faithful execution of his trust both in Spain and for peace.

When we see the French intriguing with the English against us, we have no way to oppose it but by reasoning with the English to show that they are intended to be the dupes. Inclosed are a few broken minutes of conversations, which were much more extended and particular than they appear upon paper. I submit them to your discretion.[1]

I am amazed to see New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Delaware, where I find them sometimes, in the yeas and nays. Those gentlemen and their States mean well, but are deceived.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

Paris, 12 April, 1783.

Congress forced us into a situation, which obliged us to venture upon a piece of indiscipline, in order to secure a tolerable peace, so that you may well suppose we are anxious to know how it is received among you, and what is to be our fate; whether we are to be approved, excused, justified, or censured. The most curious and inexplicable part of the history is Franklin's joining in the mutiny. You who know him will not be at a loss to account for it. In truth, the necessity was too obvious and glaring, and the cod, and bucks, and beavers were animals too dearly beloved in our country for a man to take upon himself to be responsible for the loss of them.

We have had a very dull pause since the peace. No news from America, and a stagnation in England, which has left us in a painful state of uncertainty. Now, indeed, the ministry is arranged for a little while, and Mr. Hartley is expected over to finish the negotiation. You know him; he is talkative and disputatious, and not always intelligible, so that I expect we shall be longer about the business than is necessary.

I am not able to conceive how a ministry, composed of parts so heterogeneous, can go on with business. It cannot be expected to be solid and durable. Mr. Fox professes to mean to finish soon and liberally; but I know not what opposition and

[1] This alludes to the extracts from the Diary. See vol. iii. p. 349, note.

contradiction he may meet in the cabinet. I confess I do not like the change at all. Shelburne and his set would have gone through well. Mr. Laurens, who is in London, seems pleased with the change, at least he was with the prospect a few days before it took place, and he seems to think that the tories are not so much regarded as we feared.

Shelburne did the best thing of his whole life when he made peace, and the vote against him does no honor to his opponents. The peace is really much better for England than she had a right to expect, and the continuance of the war would have been ruin. This the present set are sensible of, but truth is a small sacrifice to faction. The vote of dissatisfaction with the peace is a disagreeable event, and one knows not what effects it may have. I do not believe it could ever have been carried, if a treaty of commerce had been signed on the 30th of November. Why the commission for making such a treaty was revoked without issuing another, you must ask Mr. Marbois. I know not. I think, however, you cannot too soon send a minister to London to arrange finally a system of commerce, and to watch over all your interests in that country. French politics are now incessantly at work in England, and we may depend upon it they labor less for our good than their own. If
v our interests were the same with theirs, we might better trust them; yet not entirely, for they do not understand their own interests so well as we do ours.

Congress will never adopt a right system of foreign affairs until they consider their interests as distinct, and keep them separate, from those of all other nations. One essential part of the business and duty of their ministers is to watch French politicians as well as English, to coöperate with them where they coincide with our system, and to counteract them where they interfere with it. At least, this has ever been my opinion. It was so when I was in Congress in 1775, 1776, and 1777, and every day's experience in Europe, in every country, in every department, has afforded something in confirmation of it. I have acted in conformity to it, at every risk, and, considering the furious wrath it has occasioned, and the violent efforts to demolish me, with wonderful success. But the success would have been much more complete, if Congress had adhered to the system as steadily as I did.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 4 November, 1783.

Colonel John Trumbull, the son of the worthy Governor of Connecticut, is the bearer of this letter. I give the Governor this epithet, because I think his faithful services to our country entitle him to it. Yet even he has undergone the suspicions of some, unsupported by any solid reasons that I have heard of. We live in an age of jealousy, and it is well enough. I was led to believe in early life that jealousy is a political virtue. It has long been an aphorism with me, that it is one of the greatest securities of public liberty. Let the people keep a watchful eye over the conduct of their rulers, for we are told that great men are not at all times wise. It would be indeed a wonder, if in any age or country they were always honest. There are, however, some men among us, who, under the guise of watchful patriots, are finding fault with every public measure, with a design to destroy that just confidence in government, which is necessary for the support of those liberties, which we have so dearly purchased. Many of your countrymen, besides myself, feel very grateful to you, and those of our negotiators who joined you, in preventing the tory refugees from being obtruded upon us. These would certainly have increased the number of such kind of *patriots* as I have mentioned, and, besides, their return would have been attended with other mischievous effects. Mutual hatred and revenge would have occasioned perpetual quarrels between them and the people, and perhaps frequent bloodshed. Some of them, by art and address, might gradually recover a character, and, in time, an influence, and so become the fittest instruments in forming factions either for one foreign nation or another. We may be in danger of such factions, and should prudently expect them. One might venture to predict that they will, sooner or later, happen. We should therefore guard against the evil effects of them. I deprecate the most favored nation predominating in the councils of America, for I do not believe there is a nation on earth that wishes we should be more free or more powerful than is consistent with their ideas of their own interest. Such a disinterested spirit is not to be found in national bodies; the world would be more happy

if it prevailed more in individual persons. I will say it for my countrymen, they are, or seem to be, very grateful. All are ready freely to acknowledge our obligations to France, for the part she took in our late contest. There are a few who consider the advantage derived to her by a total separation of Britain and the colonies, which so sagacious a court doubtless foresaw and probably never lost sight of. This advantage was so glaring, in the first stages of our controversy, that those who then ran the risk of exciting even an appeal to Heaven rather than a submission to British tyranny, were well persuaded that the prospect of such a separation would induce France to interpose, and do more than she has done, if necessary. America, with the assistance of her faithful ally, has secured and established her liberty and independence. God be praised! And some would think it too bold to assert that France has thereby saved the being of her great importance. But if it be true, why may we not assert it? A punctual fulfilment of engagements solemnly entered into by treaty, is the justice, the honor, and policy of nations. If we, *who have contracted debts*, were influenced only by motives of sound policy, we should pay them as soon as possible, and provide sure and adequate funds for the payment of interest in the mean time. When we have done this, we shall have the sense of independence impressed on our minds, no longer feeling that state of inferiority which a wise king tells us the borrower stands in to the lender.

Your negotiation with Holland, as "my old friend" observed, is all your own. The faithful historian will do justice to your merits, perhaps not till you are dead. I would have you reconcile yourself to this thought. While you live, you will probably be the object of envy. The leading characters in this great revolution will not be fairly marked in the present age. It will be well if the leading principles are remembered long. You, I am sure, have not the vanity which Cicero betrayed, when he even urged his friend Licinius to publish the history of the detection of Catiline in his lifetime, that he might enjoy it. I am far from thinking that part of history redounds so much to the honor of the Roman consul, as the treaty of Holland does to its American negotiator.

December 4th. I intended to have committed the care of the

foregoing letter to Mr. Trumbull; but when he called on me I was confined to my chamber by severe bodily indisposition, unable to attend even to the lightest business. I am still kept at home, but hope soon to be abroad. Mr. Jonathan Jackson will deliver this to you, if he meets you in London; otherwise he will convey it by some safe hand. When I shall be certain of your being appointed for London, I will write to you as often as I can. May Heaven bless you, my friend, as I am affectionately yours,

S. ADAMS.

ELBRIDGE GERRY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Annapolis, 14 January, 1784.

The definitive treaty is this day ratified by Congress, and I have but a few moments, by Colonel Harmar, who is charged with the delivery thereof, to inform you that Mr. Dana is arrived and requested to attend Congress. I have suggested to some of my friends the good policy of appointing him to a seat in Congress, and to him the advantages to be at this time expected from the measure; and I flatter myself it will be adopted.

The despatches by Mr. Thaxter have been committed, and a report is made for authorizing yourself, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jay to negotiate treaties with every power mentioned in your letter. The general principles of the treaties are stated in the report, conformable to which you are to be authorized to enter into them, without first reporting to Congress, as was proposed by the resolution of October last, passed at Princeton. Those proceedings appeared to me calculated to defeat every treaty, and confine our commerce to France and Holland; for after you had formed the projects, as they are called, and sent them to America, projects of another nature would have been contrived here to have made alterations, which would have in effect rendered null your proceedings. I hope the report will pass as it now stands, and that you will be expeditious in the business.

I observe by your letters that, according to your *orders*, you have reported your conferences to the secretary of foreign affairs. Your information is useful, exceedingly so; but as the other commissioners have not adopted the same mode, I suspect they

have not received similar instructions, and that the original plan on *this* side was to discover to the *other* your communications, to prevent or destroy the confidence you have *there* established, and to make this appear as an unfortunate accident, which nevertheless ought to be attended with your recall. Be this as it may, I think the interest of yourself and Mr. Jay is, at this time, well supported in Congress. I have not time to revise, much less to correct, and therefore must bid you adieu, after requesting my best respects to Mr. Jay, his lady, and Mr. Carmichael, if in Paris. Your family was in health by the last letters from home; but Dr. Cooper was given over by his physicians. Be assured, my dear Sir, I am on every occasion yours sincerely,

E. Gerry.

I shall propose to Congress a resolution for approving, in proper and honorable terms, the negotiations of their plenipoes who negotiated the peace, but cannot say whether the measure will be successful.

TO A. M. CERISIER.

The Hague, 22 February, 1784.

I thank you for your favor of the 21st, and for the communication of the letter from my friend the Abbé de Mably.[1] I am very sensible of his partiality for a man who, he thinks, has contributed, from virtuous principles, to a great event. His approbation is the more precious to me, as I know his principles to be pure, and his spirit independent. You may be sure my advice to you will be, to write your preface, because I love to read your compositions always, for the same reason. But take care to caution your reader against an implicit adoption of the sentiments of any writer, how great soever his name may be, or how justly soever his writings in general may be esteemed. It is with great pleasure that I see the pens of a De Mably, a

[1] The Abbé de Mably had published his *Observations upon the Government and Laws of the United States*, in the form of letters addressed to Mr. Adams. Of this work a translation in Dutch was about to appear in Holland, with a preface by M. Cerisier.

Raynal, a Cerisier, a Price, turned to the subject of government. I wish the thoughts of all academies in Europe engaged on the same theme, because I really think that the science of society is much behind other arts and sciences, trades and manufactures,—that the noblest of all knowledge is the least general, and that a general spirit of inquiry would produce ameliorations in the administrations of every government in every form. I have read with pleasure the dissertation of the Baron de Hertzberg in the academy of Berlin on the 29th of last month, not because I am of his opinion, but because the example of a minister of State and an academician will probably be followed.

Mr. Van den Corput's observation upon the plan of a loan seems to merit attention; but I must leave it to the three houses, in whose experience and judgment I confide.

I return you your friend's letter, and hope soon to see his book.

TO CHARLES SPENER.

The Hague, 24 March, 1784.

I have received the almanac you were pleased to send me, and I beg of you to accept of my thanks for it. I beg your acceptance also of a couple of medals which the Baron de Thulemeier has been so good as to convey for me to you. These medals were not struck by any public authority. They are the invention and execution of the medallist Holtzhey, of Amsterdam, solely. Another has been struck by the society, *Liberty and Zeal*, in Friesland, but I have it not.

You ask my opinion of some things you have in contemplation for next year, and you shall have it with candor and sincerity. General Washington never was, and unless my countrymen run generally mad, never will be summoned by Congress to become the legislator of America. The legislation of America has been long since complete, but if it were not, she has hundreds of citizens better qualified than any officer of her army to be her legislators.

No town has been, and perhaps none will be, surveyed for the

meeting of Congress.[1] The portrait of Mr. Hancock has some resemblance in the dress and figure, but none at all in the countenance. I have not Mr. Paine's portrait. I am sorry you have any marks of an order of Cincinnatus, which is the first step taken to deface the beauty of our temple of liberty.

We have had three grand objects in view, in all our political transactions. 1. Political and civil liberty. 2. Liberty of commerce. 3. Religious liberty. Whatever tends to illustrate these would be proper for your use. These are our real glory. But perhaps it might contribute more to the sale of your almanac to insert some things which arise more from our vanity and folly.

My poor head is scarcely worth preserving even in an almanac; but as you request it, if I can conveniently get it done, you may perhaps have it before the year comes about.

TO JAMES WARREN.

Auteuil, 27 August, 1784.

I received yours of the 29th of June by Mr. Jefferson, whose appointment gives me great pleasure. He is an old friend, with whom I have often had occasion to labor at many a knotty problem, and in whose abilities and steadiness I always found great cause to confide. The appointment of this gentleman, and that of Mr. Jay and Mr. Dana, are excellent symptoms.

I am now settled with my family at a village called Auteuil, which, although as fine a situation as any in the environs of Paris, is famous for nothing but the residence of the French Swan of the Seine, Boileau, whose house and garden are a few steps from mine. The house and garden where I am, are a monument of the youthful folly of a French nobleman, the Comte de Rouault, who built it at a vast expense, but is now very glad to let it to me at a rent sixteen guineas less than I gave last year for very small and inconvenient apartments at the

[1] Mr. Spener was a bookseller at Berlin, who had proposed to Mr. Adams the two supposed events alluded to, as the leading designs for his next almanac. 1. General Washington summoned by Congress to be the legislator of America. 2. The foundation, by a survey, of a town for the meeting of Congress.

Hôtel du Roi in Paris. In house, gardens, stables, and situation I think myself better off than even Dr. Franklin, although my rent is lower. These hills of Auteuil, Passy, Chaillot, Meudon, Bellevue, St. Cloud, and even Mont Martre and Mont Calvaire, although they command the prospect of Paris and its neighborhood, that is, of every thing that is great, rich and proud, are not in my eyes to be compared to the hills of Penn and Neponset, either in the grandeur or the beauty of the prospects.

Congress have mortified me a little by cutting off one fifth of my salary, at a time when the increase of my family rather required an increase of it. The consequence of it must be that I must entertain less company, whereas the interest of the United States requires that I should entertain more. There is not a man in the world less inclined to pomp or to entertainments than myself, and to me personally it is a relief to be excused from both. But if I know any thing in the world, I know that this measure is not for the public good, nor a measure of economy. If there is any body in America who understands economy better than the Dutch nation, I know nothing of either; and their policy is always, upon occasions of consequence, to appoint ambassadors, and even ambassadors extraordinary, as they did at the late peace, my friend Brantzen, with seventy-five thousand guilders to furnish his house and his table, and seventy-five thousand guilders a year to spend in it. In short, that nation which places its own ambassadors at the tail of the whole creation, cannot itself expect to be soon at the head. If this policy do not expose our country to a million insults, and at last compel her by war and bloodshed to consult better her own honor, I am much mistaken. How are we to do? We are to negotiate with all the ambassadors here, that is, we are to be invited to dine to-morrow at a table with three thousand pounds sterling in plate upon it, and next day we are to return this civility, by inviting the same company to dine with us upon earthen ware! I am well aware of the motives to this conduct, which are virtuous and laudable, but we shall find that we cannot keep up our reputation in Europe by such means, where there is no idea of the motives and principles of it, and where extreme parsimony is not economy. We have never been allowed any thing to furnish our houses or tables, and my double capacities have obliged me to furnish myself,

both in Holland and France, which, besides exposing me to be unmercifully robbed and plundered in my absence, has pinched and straitened me confoundedly. However, I am the best man in the world to bear it, and so be it.

My affectionate regards to Mrs. Warren and the family.

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Auteuil, 4 November, 1784.

I presume this will meet you in Congress, where no doubt it is less irksome to serve than heretofore, but not yet so agreeable as it ought to be, and must be made. The States will find themselves obliged to make their delegates more comfortable and more honorable, if they do not see a necessity of giving more power to that Assembly. Many gentlemen in Europe think the powers in the confederation are not adequate. The Abbé de Mably and Dr. Price have taken the pains to publish their advice. They may be right, but I am not yet of their opinion. But most certainly the resolutions of Congress must have weight, and the members should be the best men. While the principal men in every State prefer to be governors, magistrates, &c., at home, which will be the case while they can live with their families in more honor and greater ease, it cannot be expected that the decisions of Congress will have the weight which they had, while those who had the first place in the confidence of the people composed that Assembly. I suppose at present, although some of the first characters are in Congress, the members in general have less influence than many of the magistrates at home.

By all the accounts I read and hear, which merit attention, the people are very happy, and getting fast into flourishing circumstances in their agriculture, commerce, and fisheries. May God prosper them in all! I enjoy at this humble distance their felicity, but I wish they would enable me to do them a little more honor by my manner of living. I consider this, however, as their affair, and do not distress myself much about it. I shall see at the end of the year how much I am in debt, and

if I find myself deeper than I expect, I must run away. I cannot well be worse anywhere. You know we must live altogether out of character, and avoid all company, especially all great company, which we ought to be able to see and entertain, in return for the civilities we cannot refuse from them.

You have given me an excellent colleague and a good friend in Mr. Jefferson, and the Doctor is very gracious, never so much so since he was born, at least since I knew him. Nothing, on my part, shall give him cause to be otherwise.

Shall I say a word for Dumas? The good old man will die if you drop him, and he will be useful, I think, if you continue him. If there should be war, his intelligence will be wanted; indeed, there should be a *chargé d'affaires* there, and he will do as well as any body you could send there, at a moderate expense.

Will you be so good as to write me, and let me know a little of your politics? Cannot you order your minister of foreign affairs to send the journals regularly to each of us? We ought to have them. Mr. Morris's retreat, I hope, will not interrupt or retard your fiscal arrangements. These are pressing. Doctor Franklin is dunned on all sides, and we must cut and run like Mr. Jay, if you do not provide for us.

I should be obliged to you, if you will write me what I am in debt to you, on account of my son, and draw upon me for it, whatever it is, unless you can persuade Congress to allow it you. They ought to allow you for a clerk, and if they do this, expense may be saved me, and I am very little able or willing to bear it. Yet, if it is not allowed to you, I ought to bear and will bear it, and still be much obliged to you for your kind, parental care of my boy, who loves and reveres you as he ought. He is a noble fellow, and will make a good Greek or Roman, I hope, for he spends his whole time in their company, when he is not writing for me.

I am as happy as a lord with my family, who send abundance of friendship to you and yours.

TO MRS. WARREN.

Auteuil, 13 December, 1784.

MADAM, — Your favor of the 1st of June has not, I fear, been answered. I have indeed been very happy ever since I received it. I live here on a kind of Penn's Hill. It is a village, remarkable for the residence of D'Aguesseau, Boileau, Molière, and Helvetius, and for nothing else. I choose it merely for my health, as my constitution is not able to sustain the nauseous air of a great city. Amsterdam and Paris have cost me, each of them, a nervous, putrid fever. Two such broad hints, I think, should be sufficient warning to me to live in a purer air, and in a place where I can have more exercise; but I want my rural occupations, like my friend on Neponset Hill. It is said of a court life, that although it does not render a man happy, yet it hinders him from being ever afterwards happy anywhere else. The same observation is made of a Paris life. Indeed, I can easily conceive that the delights of a court, and at Paris, becoming habitual in early life, should be hardly dispensed with in future. But these delights have taken no hold on me, and I feel myself much more disposed to whine, like Cicero or Bolingbroke, over my exile, than to regret the loss of the pleasures of courts or cities. In short, I take as little of either as possible.

It is ten years and more since I devoted myself wholly to the public. How I should feel in private life, I know not; but I believe that the habits of public life have made no deeper impression. Literary pursuits were the object of my youthful desires; but the turn in public affairs disappointed me, and I am now too old and too blind ever to resume them with much ardor or any prospect of success. My little farm is now my only resource, and books for amusement, without much improvement or a possibility of benefiting the world by my studies.

You have seen Mrs. Macaulay. I should certainly have made a visit to that lady, if she had been in London when I was there. Her literary character, and the honor she has done to those political principles which we profess, should secure her a respectful reception in Boston, which I hope she has found. In England, I think she has not been indulged with so much candor as she ought. If her marriage was not discreet, this is not

much to the world, who pardon infinitely greater indiscretions in infinitely less meritorious characters. But whoever in Europe is known to have adopted republican principles, must expect to have all the engines of every court and courtier in the world displayed against him. I wish it may be long otherwise in America.

THE ABBÉ DE MABLY TO JOHN ADAMS.

Paris, 25 Février, 1785.

Je réponds bien tard, Monsieur, à la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 14 de ce mois. C'est que j'espérois de vous porter moi-même ma réponse. Je me suis flatté de cette douce espérance, mais de jour en jour la fortune a rompu nos projets. Tantôt le temps a été trop détestable pour oser se mettre en route, et tantôt Messieurs les Abbés de Chalut, Arnoux, et moi, nous avons été condamnés par quelque indisposition à garder la chambre. J'espère qu'à l'avenir nous serons moins contrariés, mais je ne veux plus me confier à des espérances qui pouvoient encore me tromper. Rien n'est plus glorieux pour moi, Monsieur, que l'invitation que vous avez la bonté de me faire. Je ne balancerois point à entreprendre le catéchisme moral et politique dont j'ai eu l'honneur de vous parler dans les lettres qui vous sont adressées,[1] si je croyois que ce nouvel ouvrage fut de quelque utilité à votre pays. Si le premier ne produit aucun fruit, le second auroit le même sort; et ce n'est pas la peine de travailler, de chercher, d'arranger et de disposer des vérités qu'on ne voudra pas entendre. Quand j'ai invité le Congrès à cet ouvrage, je n'ai point prétendu que tous les membres de cet illustre corps y travaillassent à la fois. C'est une chose très impossible. Mais j'aurois voulu qu'après avoir chargé un de ses membres de cette besogne, il en eût fait l'examen, et après l'avoir approuvé l'eût fait paroître sous son nom. C'est ainsi qu'en usent nos parlemens, et les autres cours souveraines quand elles ordonnent des remontrances. Vous conviendrez

[1] This project of a moral catechism, to be drawn up by Congress for the use of schools, makes a leading feature of the writer's essay upon the government of the United States.

qu'un catéchisme fait et présenté de cette manière au public, auroit un beaucoup plus grand poids, et produiroit sans doute un grand bien. Je suis occupé actuellement à corriger un ancien ouvrage que je veux faire imprimer. Je ne vous fatiguerai pas par un plus long griffonage, et je me réserve le plaisir de vous parler de tout cela la première fois que j'aurai l'honneur de vous voir. J'attends ce moment avec impatience, et je vous prie d'agréer d'avance les assurances du tendre et respectueux attachement, avec lequel j'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur, &c., &c.

MABLY.

TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE.

Auteuil, 24 April, 1785.

This letter will be delivered you by your old acquaintance John Quincy Adams, whom I beg leave to recommend to your attention and favor. He is anxious to study some time at your university before he begins the study of the law, which appears at present to be the profession of his choice. He must undergo an examination, in which I suspect he will not appear exactly what he is. In truth, there are few who take their degrees at college, who have so much knowledge. But his studies having been pursued by himself, on his travels, without any steady tutor, he will be found awkward in speaking Latin, in prosody, in parsing, and even, perhaps, in that accuracy of pronunciation in reading orations or poems in that language, which is often chiefly attended to in such examinations. It seems to be necessary, therefore, that I make this apology for him to you, and request you to communicate it in confidence to the gentlemen who are to examine him, and such others as you think prudent. If you were to examine him in English and French poetry, I know not where you would find anybody his superior; in Roman and English history, few persons of his age. It is rare to find a youth possessed of so much knowledge. He has translated Virgil's Æneid, Suetonius, the whole of Sallust, and Tacitus's Agricola, his Germany, and several books of his Annals, a great part of Horace, some of Ovid, and some of Cæsar's commentaries, in writing, besides a number of Tully's

orations. These he may show you; and although you will find the translations in many places inaccurate in point of style, as must be expected at his age, you will see abundant proof that it is impossible to make those translations without understanding his authors and their language very well.

In Greek his progress has not been equal; yet he has studied morsels in Aristotle's Poetics, in Plutarch's Lives, and Lucian's Dialogues, the choice of Hercules, in Xenophon, and lately he has gone through several books in Homer's Iliad.

In mathematics I hope he will pass muster. In the course of the last year, instead of playing cards like the fashionable world, I have spent my evenings with him. We went with some accuracy through the geometry in the Preceptor, the eight books of Simpson's Euclid in Latin, and compared it, problem by problem and theorem by theorem, with le père de Chales in French; we went through plane trigonometry and plain sailing, Fenning's Algebra, and the decimal fractions, arithmetical and geometrical proportions, and the conic sections, in Ward's mathematics. I then attempted a sublime flight, and endeavored to give him some idea of the differential method of calculation of the Marquis de L'Hôpital, and the method of fluxions and infinite series of Sir Isaac Newton; but alas! it is thirty years since I thought of mathematics, and I found I had lost the little I once knew, especially of these higher branches of geometry, so that he is as yet but a smatterer, like his father. However, he has a foundation laid, which will enable him with a year's attendance on the mathematical professor, to make the necessary proficiency for a degree. He is studious enough, and emulous enough, and when he comes to mix with his new friends and young companions, he will make his way well enough. I hope he will be upon his guard against those airs of superiority among the scholars, which his larger acquaintance with the world, and his manifest superiority in the knowledge of some things, may but too naturally inspire into a young mind, and I beg of you, Sir, to be his friendly monitor in this respect and in all others.

TO SAMUEL ADAMS.

Auteuil, 27 April, 1785.

The child whom you used to lead out into the Common, to see with detestation the British troops, and with pleasure the Boston militia, will have the honor to deliver you this letter. He has since seen the troops of most nations in Europe, without any ambition, I hope, of becoming a military man. He thinks of the bar and peace and civil life, and I hope will follow and enjoy them with less interruption than his father could. If you have in Boston a virtuous club, such as we used to delight and improve ourselves in, they will inspire him with such sentiments as a young American ought to entertain, and give him less occasion for lighter company.

I think it no small proof of his discretion, that he chooses to go to New England rather than to Old. You and I know, that it will probably be more for his honor and his happiness in the result; but young gentlemen of eighteen do not always see through the same medium with old ones of fifty.

So I am going to London! I suppose you will threaten me with being envied again. I have more cause to be pitied; and although I will not say with Dr. Cutler, "I hate to be pitied," I do not know why I should dread envy. I shall be sufficiently vexed, I expect. But as Congress are about to act with dignity, I do not much fear but that I shall be able to do something worth going for. If I do not, I shall come home, and envy nobody, nor be envied. If they send as good a man to Spain, as they have in Jay for their foreign department, and will have in Jefferson at Versailles, I shall be able to correspond in perfect confidence with all those public characters that I shall have most need of assistance from, and shall fear nothing.

TO JOHN JEBB.

London, 21 August, 1785.

As I had the misfortune, the other day, not to agree fully with you in opinion concerning the 36th article of the Constitution

of Pennsylvania,[1] I beg leave to state to you my objections against it, and then to ask you if there is not some weight in them.

My first objection is, that it is not intelligible. It is impossible to discover what is meant by "offices of profit." Does it mean that there can be no necessity for, nor use in, annexing either salary, fees, or perquisites, to public offices? and that all who serve the public should have no pay from the public, but should subsist themselves and families out of their own private fortunes, or their own labor in their private profession, calling, trade, or farm? This seems to be the sense of it, and in this sense it may make its court to the Quakers and Moravians, Dunkers, Mennonites, or other worthy people in Pennsylvania, that is to say, to their prejudices, and it will recommend itself to whatever there is of popular malignity and envy, and of vulgar avarice, in every country. But it is founded in error and mischief. For public offices in general require the whole time, and all the attention of those who hold them. They can have no time nor strength of body or mind for their private professions, trades, or farms. They must then starve with their families unless they have ample fortunes. But would you make it a law that no man should hold an office who had not a private income sufficient for the subsistence and prospects of himself and family? What would be the consequence of this? All offices would be monopolized by the rich; the poor and the middling ranks would be excluded, and an aristocratic despotism would immediately follow, which would take by fraud and intrigue at first, and by open avowed usurpation soon, whatever they pleased for their compensation.

My second objection to the article is, that it is inconsistent. After seeming to require that offices should have no emoluments, it stumbles at its own absurdity, and adds: "But if any man is

[1] This was the first Constitution of that State. The article is in these words: "As every freeman, to preserve his own independence, (if without a sufficient estate), ought to have some profession, calling, trade, or farm, whereby he may honestly subsist, there can be no necessity for, nor use in, establishing offices of profit, the usual effects of which are dependence and servility unbecoming freemen in the possessors and expectants, faction, contention, corruption, and disorder among the people. But if any man is called into public service to the prejudice of his private affairs, he has a right to expect a reasonable compensation for his services; and whenever an office, through increase of fees, or otherwise, becomes so profitable as to occasion many to apply for it, the profits ought to be, and shall be lessened by the legislature.

called into public service to the prejudice of his private affairs, he has a right to a reasonable compensation." Is not this contrary to the doctrine that there can be no use in offices of profit? Are not the profits of offices intended as a reasonable compensation for time, labor, and neglect and prejudice of private affairs? If you look into the salaries and fees of offices in general, that is, into the legal profits, you will find them, not only in America, but in France, Holland, nay in England, far from being extravagant. You will find them but a moderate and reasonable compensation for their unavoidable expenses and the prejudice to their private affairs. It is not the legal profit, but the secret perquisites, the patronage, and the abuse, which is the evil. And this is what I complain of in the article, that it diverts the attention, jealousy, and hatred of the people from the perquisites, patronage, and abuse, which is the evil, to the legal, honest profit of the office, which is a blessing.

3. The dependence and servility in the possessors and expectants, and the faction, contention, corruption, and disorder among the people, do not proceed from the legal profits of offices, which are known to all, but from the perquisites, patronage, and abuses, which are known only to a few.

4. Nor is it by any means a good rule, that whenever an office, through increase of fees or otherwise, becomes so profitable as to occasion many to apply for it, the profit ought to be lessened by the legislature.

We are so fond of being seen and talked of, we have such a passion for the esteem and confidence of our fellow-men, that wherever applications for office are permitted by the laws and manners, there will be many to apply, whether the profits are large or small, or none at all. If the profits are none, all the rich will apply, that is to say, all who can live upon their own incomes; all others will be excluded, because, if they labor for the public, themselves and families must starve. By this means an aristocracy or oligarchy of the rich will be formed, which will soon put an end by their arts and craft to this self-denying system. If many apply, all applications should be forbidden, or, if they are permitted, a choice should be made of such out of the multitude as will be contented with legal profits, without making advantage of patronage and perquisites.

I do not mean by this, that the legal profits should be very

great. They should afford a decent support, and should enable a man to educate and provide for his family as decent and moderate men do in private life; but it would be unjust as well as impolitic in the public, to call men of the best talents and characters from professions and occupations where they might provide for their families plentifully, and let them spend their lives in the service of the public, to the impoverishment and beggary of their posterity.

I have given you this trouble, because I think these to be fundamental errors in society. Mankind will never be happy nor their liberties secure, until the people shall lay it down as a fundamental rule to make the support and reward of public offices a matter of justice and not gratitude. Every public man should be honestly paid for his services; then justice is done to him. But he should be restrained from every perquisite not known to the laws, and he should make no claims upon the gratitude of the public, nor ever confer an office within his patronage, upon a son, a brother, a friend, upon pretence that he is not paid for his services by the profits of his office. Members of parliament should be paid, as well as soldiers and sailors.

I know very well that the word "disinterested" turns the heads of the people by exciting their enthusiasm. But although there are disinterested men, they are not enough in any age or any country to fill all the necessary offices, and therefore the people may depend upon it, that the hypocritical pretence of disinterestedness will be set up to deceive them, much oftener than the virtue will be practised for their good. It is worth while to read the lives of the Roman Catholic saints; your St. Ignatius Loyolas, your St. Bernards, and hundreds of others. It was always disinterestedness, which enabled them to excite enthusiasm among the people, and to command their purses to any amount, in order to establish their wild and pernicious institutions. The cry of gratitude has made more men mad, and established more despotism in the world, than all other causes put together. Every throne has been erected on it, and every mitre has sprung out of it; so has every coronet; and whenever any man serves the public without pay, a cry of gratitude is always set up, which pays him, or his cousins or sons, ten times as much as he ever deserved. Let government, then, be founded in justice; and let all claims upon popular gratitude

be watched with a jealous eye. Hang well and pay well, conveys to my understanding infinitely more sense and more virtue than this whole article of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

I have long wanted to communicate with some of the enlightened friends of liberty here upon some parts of our constitutions, and I know of none who merits the character better. If you are willing, I will take some future opportunity to write you a few thoughts upon some other things. Meantime, let this remain between ourselves, if you please.

TO ARTHUR LEE.

London, 6 September, 1785.

I received yesterday your favor of 27th July, and wish it were in my power to relieve your anxiety by giving you any comfortable hopes from this country.

The national sense and public voice is decidedly against us in the whale-trade and ship-trade, and there are as yet but feeble parties for us in the West India trade and colony trade. I may say to you, that if Ireland had not escaped from the snare, we should have had a very dull prospect. I see no resource for us but in a navigation act, and this will not relieve us soon. Our merchants have enslaved themselves to this country by the debts they have contracted. They are afraid to explore new channels of commerce, lest they should offend the British merchants and be sued. But there is no choice left us. Our country must not be ruined, in tenderness to those who have run imprudently too far into debt.

As far as I can penetrate the hearts of the ministers, they are very far from being as they should be relative to us. Those of them who have acquired immense popularity, reputation, and influence, by former professions of attachment to the American cause, as Camden and Richmond, are much changed; in short, we have no party for us here. Yet, indeed, there is no party at present that dares declare very explicitly against us. All sides are as silent and mysterious as you can conceive them to be, and when I shall get any answer, I cannot guess;

but I can confidently guess that when it does come, it will not be what it must finally be, in order to relieve us, and bring the two countries together in good humor.

Ireland, I think, stands between us and evil. Her indocility may have changed the plans of the cabinet in many particulars. In short, I do not believe there is any fixed plan, or will be any, until the next budget shall be opened. The debt stands between Ireland and harm. This country is in a more critical situation than ours. Yet it may take two years to decide its fate. Many persons express anxious fears of distractions and anarchy; others think they cannot stand under the burden of the debt; but must lower the interest.

The policy of our country is not perfect, neither. The most fatal and egregious fault of all is leaving their debt in Holland and France unfunded. This error is so easily rectified that it is astonishing it is not done. This single step may protect us from a war, and confute forever the numberless calumnies which circulate now, and will never cease until that is done. I have hitherto paid the interest in Holland out of the principal; but this will by and by be impracticable, and then such a clamor and obloquy will succeed as will make us all ashamed of ourselves. How will it be possible to vindicate the faith or the honor of our country?

You give me great pleasure by your approbation of my son's conduct, and I am under great obligation to your brother for the notice he took of him. Count Sarsfield, who has just now left me, is rejoiced at your appointment to the treasury, and desires me to present his regards to you. He leads the life of a peripatetic philosopher here, has done so since May, and will stay till October. He rambles with Lord Shelburne and Lord Harcourt, and is the happiest man I know. I have seen him two summers in Holland. Observation and reflection are all his business, and his dinner and his friend all his pleasure. If a man was born for himself alone, I would take him for a model.

TO JOHN JEBB.

London, 10 September, 1785.

It is a wise maxim that every free man ought to have some profession, calling, trade, or farm, whereby he may honestly subsist; but it by no means follows as a consequence that there can be no necessity for, nor use in establishing offices of profit, if we mean by these, offices with moderate, decent, and stated salaries, sufficient for the comfortable support of the officers and their families. Offices in general ought to yield as honest a subsistence, and as clear an independence as professions, callings, trades, or farms. If by offices of profit we mean offices of excessive profit, it is not only true that there can be no necessity for them nor use in establishing them, but it is clear they ought never to exist. The dependence and servility unbecoming freemen in the possessors and expectants, the faction, contention, corruption, and disorder amongst the people, do not arise from the honest profit, but from the excess, and they oftener arise from ambition than avarice. An office without profits, without salary, fees, perquisites, or any kind of emolument, is sought for with servility, faction, and corruption, from ambition, as often as an office of profit is sought from avarice.

And this is the way in which corruption is constantly introduced into society. It constantly begins with the people, in their elections. Indeed, the first step of corruption is this dishonest disposition in the people, an unwillingness to pay their representatives. The moment they require of a candidate that he serve them gratis, they establish an aristocracy by excluding from a possibility of serving them, all who are poor and unambitious, and by confining their suffrages to a few rich men. When this point is once gained of the people, which is easily gained, because their own avarice pleads for it, tyranny has made a gigantic stride. I appeal to your knowledge of England, whether servility, faction, contention, and corruption appear anywhere in so gross forms as in the election of members of parliament, whose offices are very expensive and have no profits. Is not the legislative at this hour more corrupt than the executive? Are there not more servility, faction, contention, and corruption in the offices in the election of the people than

in disposing of those in the gift of the crown? Are there not as many in proportion who apply for these elections as for offices in the army, navy, church, or revenue? The number of persons who apply for an office, then, is no proof of an increase of its fees or profits. The man who offers to a city or borough to serve them for nothing, offers a bribe to every elector, and the answer should be, "Sir, you affront me. I want a service which is worth something. I am able and willing to pay for it. I will not lay myself under any obligation to you by accepting your gift. I will owe you no gratitude any further than you serve me faithfully. The obligation and gratitude shall be from you to me, and if you do not do your duty to me, I will be perfectly free to call you to an account, and to punish you; and if you will not accept of pay for your service, you shall not serve me."

There are in history examples of characters wholly disinterested, who have displayed the sublimest talents, the greatest virtues, at the same time that they have made long and severe sacrifices to their country, of their time, their estates, their labor, healths, and even their lives, and they are deservedly admired and revered by all virtuous men. But how few have they been! One in two or three ages; certainly not enough to watch over the rights of mankind, for these have been lost in almost all ages and nations. Societies should not depend upon a succession of such men for the preservation of their liberties. The people ruin their own cause, by exacting such sacrifices in their service. Men see nothing but misery to themselves and ruin to their families, attached to the honest service of the people, and the examples of Aristides, Fabricius, and Cincinnatus, have in all ages terrified thousands of able and worthy men from engaging in a service so hopeless and uncomfortable. Knaves and hypocrites see through the whole system at once. "I will take the people their own way," says one of these, "I will serve them without pay. I will give them money. I will make them believe that I am perfectly disinterested, until I gain their confidence and excite their enthusiasm. Then I will carry that confidence and enthusiasm to market, and will sell it for more than all I give them, and all their pay would have amounted to. *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur.* It should be a fundamental maxim with the people never to receive any

services gratis, nor to suffer any faithful service to go unrewarded, nor any unfaithful services unpunished. Their rewards should be temperate. Instead of this, how stingy are they at first, and how wild at last! Stingy, until the man has served them long enough to gain their confidence, mad and frantic with generosity, afterwards. Their gratitude, when once their enthusiasm is excited, knows no bounds; it scatters their favors all around the man. His family, his father, brother, son, all his relations, all his particular friends, must be idolized. Wealth and power without measure or end must be conferred upon them, without considering whether they be wise men or fools, honest men or knaves.

The social science will never be much improved, until the people unanimously know and consider themselves as the fountain of power, and until they shall know how to manage it wisely and honestly. Reformation must begin with the body of the people, which can be done only, to effect, in their educations. The whole people must take upon themselves the education of the whole people, and must be willing to bear the expenses of it. There should not be a district of one mile square, without a school in it, not founded by a charitable individual, but maintained at the expense of the people themselves. They must be taught to reverence themselves, instead of adoring their servants, their generals, admirals, bishops, and statesmen. Instead of admiring so extravagantly a prince of Orange, we should admire the Batavian nation, which produced him. Instead of adoring a Washington, mankind should applaud the nation which educated him. If Thebes owes its liberty and glory to Epaminondas, she will lose both when he dies, and it would have been as well if she had never enjoyed a taste of either. But if the knowledge, the principles, the virtues, and the capacities of the Theban nation produced an Epaminondas, her liberties and glory will remain when he is no more. And if an analogous system of education is established and enjoyed by the whole nation, it will produce a succession of Epaminondases. The human mind naturally exerts itself to form its character, according to the ideas of those about it. When children and youth hear their parents and neighbors, and all about them, applauding the love of country, of labor, of liberty, and all the virtues, habits, and faculties, which constitute a good citizen, that is, a

patriot and a hero, those children endeavor to acquire those qualities, and a sensible and virtuous people will never fail to form multitudes of patriots and heroes. I glory in the character of a Washington, because I know him to be only an exemplification of the American character. I know that the general character of the natives of the United States is the same with his, and that the prevalence of such sentiments and principles produced his character and preserved it, and I know there are thousands of others who have in them all the essential qualities, moral and intellectual, which compose it. If his character stood alone, I should value it very little, — I should wish it had never existed; because, although it might have wrought a great event, yet that event would be no blessing. In the days of Pompey, Washington would have been a Cæsar; his officers and partisans would have stimulated him to it; he could not have had their confidence without it; in the time of Charles, a Cromwell; in the days of Philip the second, a prince of Orange, and would have wished to be Count of Holland. But in America he could have no other ambition than that of retiring. In wiser and more virtuous times he would not have had that, for that is an ambition. He would still be content to be Governor of Virginia, President of Congress, a member of a Senate, or a House of Representatives. It was a general sentiment in America that Washington must retire. Why? What is implied in this necessity? If he could not afford to serve the public longer without pay, let him be paid. Would it lessen his reputation? Why should it? If the people were perfectly judicious, instead of lessening, it would raise it. But if it did not, surely the late revolution was not undertaken to raise one great reputation to make a sublime page in history, but for the good of the people. Does not this idea of the necessity of his retiring, imply an opinion of danger to the public, from his continuing in public, a jealousy that he might become ambitious? and does it not imply something still more humiliating, a jealousy in the people of one another, a jealousy of one part of the people, that another part had grown too fond of him, and acquired habitually too much confidence in him, and that there would be danger of setting him up for a king? Undoubtedly it does, and undoubtedly there were such suspicions, and grounds for them too. Now, I ask, what occasioned this dangerous enthusiasm for

him? I answer, that, great as his talents and virtues are, they did not altogether contribute so much to it as his serving without pay, which never fails to turn the heads of the multitude. His ten thousand officers under him, and all his other admirers, might have sounded his fame as much as they would, and they might have justly sounded it very high, and it would not all have produced such ecstasies among the people as this single circumstance. Now, I say, this is all wrong. There should have been no such distinction made between him and the other generals. He should have been paid, as well as they, and the people should have too high a sense of their own dignity ever to suffer any man to serve them for nothing. The higher and more important the office, the more rigorously should they insist upon acknowledging its appointment by them and its dependence upon them. But then they must be sensible of their own enthusiasm, and constantly upon their guard against it. They should consider that, although history presents us perhaps with one example in five hundred years of one disinterested character, it shows us two thousand instances every year of the semblance of disinterestedness, counterfeited for the most selfish purposes of cheating them more effectually. And the glory of an Aristides and half a dozen others, with the transient flashes of liberty they preserved in the world, is a miserable compensation to mankind for the long, dreary ages of gloomy despotism, which have passed almost over the whole earth by means of disinterested patriots becoming artful knaves, or rather by the people themselves not suffering their benefactors to persevere in that disinterestedness to the end, which they exact of them at first; for I think that it has been the people themselves who have always created their own despots.

You erased something you had written about the present times. I wish you would restore it. This correspondence must be confidential. But the late Lord Chatham is a striking example. He preserved the character of disinterestedness but imperfectly; yet it was somewhat of this kind that elevated him so high in the affections of the people, and you now see the consequences. The people think it a duty to God to make up in their devotion to his son, what they think they were wanting in gratitude to him. What but a whirlwind could have done what we have seen?

Government must become something more intelligible, rational, and steady.

Pardon all this from your friend.

TO JOHN JEBB.

London, 25 September, 1785.

I have read with pleasure your letter of the 13th, and although I cannot entirely agree with you, I find the difference between us is very small in comparison with that between me and some other of my friends. In Mr. Hume's perfect Commonwealth, "no representative, magistrate, or Senator, as such, has any salary. The protector, secretaries, councils, and ambassadors have salaries." Your opinion coincides with his, excepting that you think the higher magistrates, as the judges for example, should have salaries. I carry the point so far as to desire that all representatives, magistrates, and Senators, as well as judges and executive officers, should have salaries. Not merely upon the principle of justice, that every man has a right to compensation for his time and labor, but to maintain the responsibility of the person, and to raise and support, both in the minds of the people themselves, and of their representatives, senators, and magistrates, a sense of the dignity and importance of the people. These salaries, to be sure, should be in proportion to the nature and duration of the service. A project to introduce such a practice into this country, would be chimerical; but in a country where it has long obtained and still exists, I wish it to continue. In some parts of the United States it has ever prevailed, and it is to be hoped it may be extended to all other parts. It is thought by many to be one of the best securities of liberty and equality.

In the thirteenth section of the second chapter of the Constitution of Massachusetts, you may see their sense of the importance of salaries to governors and judges. My friend, de Mably, page 87, expresses great indignation against it. "*Je voudrais, au contraire, qu'à mesure que les dignités sont plus importantes, on leur attribuât des appointemens moins considérables. Je voudrais*

même qu'elles n'en eûssent aucuns. . . . On aime bien peu la patrie quand on demande des salaires pour la servir. Que la république de Massachusetts ait le courage de détruire la loi dont je me plains." I love the Abbé and revere his memory, but I was sorry that so crude an idea should be scattered in America, where many will be greedy to lay hold of it, and that a great writer who had spent fifty years in reading upon government, and had done honor to his age by his writings, should adopt with such facility so gross a vulgar error and popular blunder. Flattery has done more mischief to society, when addressed to the people, than when offered to kings. There is always, in every popular Assembly, a party actuated by a sordid avarice. One of two candidates for an election, by offering to serve without pay, will have all the votes of this description of electors. So will the Abbé's doctrine, but he had not considered that an aristocracy would be the immediate and inevitable consequence of it. In the Massachusetts there would be no choice left; there are but two at most, if there is more than one, who could serve as governor. A fine bargain the people would make of it! For the sake of saving a penny a piece, which it would cost them for a salary, they must pass by a thousand wise and virtuous men, and give their votes only for two rich ones, and that, whether they have wisdom and virtues or not. The people save nothing in the end. The consequence is, there must be no strict inquiry, no exact accounts. The Governor's family must be provided for by offices, and his son, fit or unfit, must be put in his place. The magistrates in France, instead of having salaries, buy their offices. What is the consequence? Let the Abbé himself say. He would answer from Heaven, that they find ways to levy partial taxes to support even their mistresses, at three times the expense of the whole salary of a Massachusetts Governor.

Adieu.

R. H. LEE TO JOHN ADAMS.

Chantilly, 12 December, 1785.

Dear Sir, — My presidential year being ended, I had left New York for this place (from which and from my family I had

been thirteen months absent) before the letters which you did me the honor to write me on the 26th of August, the 6th and 7th of September, came to hand, which has prevented me from showing the civilities to Mr. Storer and Mr. Wingrove, that I should otherwise have taken pleasure in doing. The state of my health is so precarious (being at present prevented by the gout in my right hand from writing myself), that it is uncertain when I shall be permitted to return to Congress; but let me be where I will, I shall always be happy to correspond with you. My brother, Arthur Lee, who now resides at New York, a commissioner of the treasury of the United States, will receive and forward to me such letters as you are pleased to write. It gives me pleasure to know that Colonel Smith is so agreeable a secretary to you. Indeed, I had expected so from his politeness, his good sense, and his spirit. It is certainly a misfortune both to the United States and to Great Britain, that a singular kind of *after wisdom* of the latter, should so perpetually keep the two countries at variance with each other. To profit from experience so becometh nations as well as individuals, that it denoteth much ill to both, when advice is not taken from that best source of knowledge. It is this kind of wisdom that, having already irrecoverably lost to Great Britain a great and valuable part of her dominions, is now proceeding to deprive her of a great and valuable part of her commerce, also. For I plainly perceive that the State errors, and the commercial mistakes of that country, are going to force these United States, contrary to their inclination, into systems that will probably prevent our trade from ever again flowing, as it probably would have done, into British channels. It is true that we may be injured in the commencement of these experiments; but it is certain that those who compel them will be more hurt. A similar experiment has been lately made, and the issue recent; yet such is the curse attending Britain and British statesmen, that they will neither remember the one or profit from the other. I join with you in hoping soon to see American factories established in the east, and certainly it will be highly agreeable to me to find Mr. Steptoe promoting there his country's and his own good.

I have the honor to be, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TO COUNT SARSFIELD.

London, 3 February, 1786.

In your kind letter of the 26th of January, you ask an explanation of that expression of the Massachusetts, "a rider of hobby-horses." In the original of the word hobby-horse, it signified a little horse, the same with pony in English, or *bidet* in French. The English then transferred it to Irish and Scottish horses, *cheval d'Irlande* and *d'Écosse*. From this horse it was transferred to those little wooden horses which are made for children to ride on for their amusement. It is defined "a stick on which boys get astride and ride;" "*un bâton par lequel les enfans vont à cheval.*" It is defined in Latin, *arundo longa*, a reed or cane; for the boys in want of better instruments made use of these. From these originals it has been used, I do not know whether metaphorically or poetically, to signify any favorite amusement of grown men of all ranks and denominations, even sages and heroes, philosophers and legislators, nobles, princes, and kings. All nations, I believe, have some word appropriated to this meaning. There is one in French, which I once knew familiarly, but have forgotten. The Dutch have a proverb, "*Jeder heeft zyn speelpop*," "every one has his hobby-horse." For example, the hobby-horse of Mr. Lionet was the anatomy of caterpillars; that of Mr. Ploos Van Amstell, to collect drawings, &c. The Italians say, "*Quel legno o bastone che i fanciulli si mettono fra gambe e chiamano il loro cavallo.*" The Dutch proverb is very true; every man has a staff which he puts sometimes between his legs and rides, and calls it his hobby-horse. It is in this sense the hobby-horse of many curious persons, to become acquainted with singular and extraordinary characters.

It has ever been my hobby-horse to see rising in America an empire of liberty, and a prospect of two or three hundred millions of freemen, without one noble or one king among them. You say it is impossible. If I should agree with you in this, I would still say, let us try the experiment, and preserve our equality as long as we can. A better system of education for the common people might preserve them long from such artificial inequalities as are prejudicial to society, by confounding the natural distinctions of right and wrong, virtue and vice.

SAMUEL ADAMS TO JOHN ADAMS.

Boston, 13 April, 1786.

Doctor Gordon is to deliver you this letter. He is going to the land of his nativity, wishing for the best happiness of his own country and ours, and hoping that mutual affection will be at length restored, as the only means of the prosperity of both. As he determines to spend the remainder of his days in the country where he was born, what rational man, who considers the ties of human nature, will wonder if "*esto perpetua*," is his most ardent prayer *for her?* But the attachments he has made here, his private friendships, and the part he has taken in our public cause, afford reason to believe that his second wish is for us. I am afraid, however, that the Dr. builds too much upon the hopes of the return of mutual affection; for can this exist without forgiveness of injury, and can his country ever cordially forgive ours, whom she intended to injure so greatly? Her very disappointment will perpetually irritate her own feelings, and in spite of reason or religion, prevent her conceiving a sentiment of friendship for us. And, besides, she will never believe that there is a possibility that *we* can forgive *her*. We must, therefore, be content, at least for a great while to come, to live with her as a prudent man will with one who indeed has professed a friendship for him, but whose sincerity he has reason vehemently to suspect; guarding against injury from him, by making it his interest to do as little as possible. This is an arduous task our country has committed to you. Trade is a matter I have had so little to do with, that it is not in my power to aid you in this more than in any one thing else. May he who has endued you with a strength of understanding that your country confides in, afford you all that light which is necessary for so great an undertaking!

The *child* whom I led by the hand, with a particular design, I find is now become a promising youth. He brought me one of your letters. God bless the lad! If I was instrumental at that time of enkindling the sparks of patriotism in his tender heart, it will add to my consolation in the latest hour. Adieu, my friend. Mrs. Adams desires your lady and family may be assured of her cordial esteem and love. Believe me, &c.

S. ADAMS.

TO COTTON TUFTS.[1]

London, 26 May, 1786.

There is a subject so closely connected with the business of my mission to this court, that I can no longer be silent upon it with honor. The most insuperable bar to all my negotiations here has been laid by those States, which have made laws against the treaty. The Massachusetts is one of them. The law for suspending execution for British debts, however colored or disguised, I make no scruple to say to you is a direct breach of the treaty. Did my ever dear, honored, and beloved Massachusetts mean to break her public faith? I cannot believe it of her. Let her then repeal the law without delay.

I cannot conceive the reason why the Senate did not concur with the House in repealing the laws excluding the tories. Why should a silly warfare be kept up at so great an expense against those wretches?

It is our persecution alone, that makes their enmity powerful and important. Are we afraid they will be popular and persuade our people to come under the British yoke again? We have one infallible security against that, I assure you. This government and this nation would spurn us, if we were to offer them the sovereignty of us. The reason is plain; they know it would be the certain and final ruin of the nation to accept it, because we could throw them again into a war, not only against us, but France, Spain, and Holland, and emancipate ourselves again whenever we should please.

Are the merchants afraid the tories will get their commerce? What is this to the country? Their capitals will assist us in paying our debts, and in opening a trade every way. Are our politicians afraid of their places? In freedom's name let our countrymen have their own choice, and if they please to choose Jonathan Sewall for their ambassador at St. James's, I will return to Penn's Hill with pleasure.

I long to see my countrymen acting as if they felt their own great souls, with dignity, generosity, and spirit, not as if they

[1] This gentleman, who had married the sister of Mrs. Adams's mother, and had been intrusted with the sole care of Mr. Adams's private affairs during his absence, was at this time a member of the Senate of Massachusetts.

were guided by little prejudices and passions, and partial private interests.

On the one hand, I would repeal every law that has the least appearance of clashing with the treaty of peace; on the other, I would prohibit or burden with duties every importation from Britain, and would demand, in a tone that would not be resisted, the punctual fulfilment of every iota of the treaty on the part of Britain. Nay, I would carry it so far, that if the posts were not immediately evacuated, I would not go and attack them, but declare war directly, and march one army to Quebec and another to Nova Scotia.

This is decisive language, you will say. True. But no great thing was ever done in this world but by decisive understandings and tempers, unless by accident.

Our countrymen have too long trifled with public and private faith, public and private credit, and I will venture to say that nothing but remorse and disgrace, poverty and misery, will be their portion until these are held sacred.

TO COTTON TUFTS.

London, 2 June, 1786.

I am proud to learn, by your letter of 13th April, that I am so rich at the university. If Thomas gets in, I shall be still happier.[1] The expense will be considerable, and your draught shall be honored for the necessary.

A year will soon be about, and what are we to do then with John? What lawyer shall we desire to take him, in town or country? and what sum must be given with him? and what will his board and clothing cost? and where shall we get money to pay all these expenses? Shall I come home and take all my boys into my own office? I was once thought to have a tolerable knack at making lawyers, and now could save a large sum by it. I am afraid I shall not get it done so cheap as I used to do it.

I do not see why I should stay here, unless there should be a

[1] Mr. Adams had his three sons at Cambridge at the same time.

change in the sentiments and conduct of my fellow-citizens. There are, however, some appearances of an approaching change.

Dr. Gordon's language is decent and friendly, as far as I have heard. I believe the suspicion of him, that appears to have taken place in America, is needless. What profit he will make of his history, I know not. It is a story that nobody here loves to read. Indeed, neither history, nor poetry, nor any thing but painting and music, balls and spectacles, is in vogue. Reading is out of fashion, and philosophy itself has become a fop gambolling in a balloon, "idling in the wanton summer's air," like the gossamer,—so light is vanity. Herschel, indeed, with his new glass, has discovered the most magnificent spectacle that ever was seen or imagined, and I suppose it is chiefly as a spectacle that his discovery is admired. If all those single, double, triple, quadruple worlds are peopled as fully as every leaf and drop is in this, what a merry company there is of us in the universe, all fellow-creatures, insects, animalcules, and all! Why are we kept so unacquainted with each other? I fancy we shall know each other better, and shall see that even cards and routs, dancing dogs, learned pigs, scientific birds, &c., are not so despicable things as we in our wonderful wisdom sometimes think them.

The Bishop of Llandaff has made the trees, not walk, but feel and think, and why should we not at once settle it, that every atom thinks and feels, a universe tremblingly alive all over?

The more we pursue these speculations, the higher sense we shall have of the Father and Master of all, and the firmer expectation that all which now appears irregular, will be found to be design. But where have I rambled?

TO BENJAMIN HICHBORN.

London, 27 January, 1787.

I have received with pleasure your obliging letter of the 24th of October, and am much affected with the disagreeable state of things in the Massachusetts. It is indeed news to me that

there is any such fixed determination as you mention, in the minds of men of greatest influence. Perhaps I am not a proper confidant of those gentlemen. As to my coming home, it is not possible for me to come home with decency until next year, at the expiration of my commission, which will be in about twelve months. Then I shall come home, of course. I wish with all my heart I were now in Boston, or to embark for that town to-morrow; not that I give full credit to your sanguine partiality to me in supposing that I shall be chosen first magistrate; not that I think it an eligible situation in such times, or that my health or other qualifications would enable me to sustain the weight of it with dignity at any time. Indeed, I doubt whether my sentiments of government are agreeable to the majority of our State, and I am not enough of an accommodating disposition to give up or conceal sentiments that I think of consequence, for the sake of places. The commotions in New England alarmed me so much that I have thrown together some hasty speculations upon the subject of government, which you will soon see. If the general spirit of those papers is not approved in our country, my career in political life will be very short.

I see, by some newspapers received to-day, that you have distinguished yourself in support of the laws, in a manner that does you great honor, and will not soon be forgotten. I begin to suspect that some gentlemen who had more zeal than knowledge in the year 1770, will soon discover that I had good policy, as well as sound law, on my side, when I ventured to lay open before our people the laws against riots, routs, and unlawful assemblies. Mobs will never do to govern States or command armies. I was as sensible of it in 1770 as I am in 1787. To talk of liberty in such a state of things! Is not a Shattuck or a Shays as great a tyrant, when he would pluck up law and justice by the roots, as a Bernard or a Hutchinson, when he would overturn them partially? You see I have not forgotten old stories any more than you. I am sorry, however, that you recollect the old affair of the letters, in which I ever believed you as innocent as myself, and more so, too. I had long since forgotten it, or at least all unpleasant feelings occasioned by it. Although those letters gave offence to some men whom I always esteemed, there were other sentiments in them

which contributed to apprise the continent early of what I was about, and to prepare their minds for it. Those letters are the first monument extant of the immortally glorious project of Independence.[1] Instead of blushing at them altogether, I glory in them, and so will my grandchild that I hope to see next spring. You will oblige me much, Sir, by any communications you can spare the time to make me.

TO PHILIP MAZZEI.

London, 12 June, 1787.

Your favor of the 24th of May is before me. To defend the separation of the legislative, executive, judicial powers from each other, and the division of the legislative into three branches, from the attacks of county committees, riotous assemblies, and uninformed philosophers and statesmen, will be the burden of my song, and I am very glad to find that the attempt has met with your approbation. Such a distribution of power appears to me the *unum necessarium* of liberty, safety, and good order, and, therefore, no pains taken to preserve it will be thrown away. An application has been made to me here in behalf of a French writer, who is very capable of translating such a book, and who wishes to publish an edition in French, in London. His name is De la Tour. I have discouraged his project hitherto, because Mr. Jefferson informed me that some one had undertaken it in Paris. You inform me that several have applied to government for permission. But will they obtain it? I am just returned from an excursion to Amsterdam, where I was told by a bookseller that he was about getting it translated into Dutch. But I doubt whether any of these undertakers will proceed; for American affairs are not now so interesting in Europe as they were in the time of the war, and such a work will not sell now as it would then. I should be glad to know with certainty whether your bookseller has obtained permission, and whether he will proceed, for the regulation of my own con-

[1] The allusion is to the intercepted letters. See vol. ii. p. 411, note.

duct. Has he published his advertisement? I should think he had better proceed with the first volume, without waiting for the second, that he may form a better judgment, whether it is worth his while to translate the second at all.

If the separate States preserve inviolable the divisions and separations and independence of these several authorities, their liberties, their security, their good order, prosperity, grandeur, and glory will be the certain consequence, whatever imperfections may remain incurable in the confederation. But, if these precautions are not taken, we shall have a capricious and a turbulent, if not a bloody scene, in America for a hundred years to come. So it appears to me, and no endeavors of mine shall be wanting to secure the good and prevent the evil, however unpopular I may make myself by the attempt.

R. H. LEE TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 3 September, 1787.

Since my letter to you of December, 1785, from Chantilly, in Virginia, in answer to the letters that you were pleased to write me on the 26th of August, 6th and 7th of September, 1785, I have not been honored with any letter from you. On my arrival here, I met with and read with great pleasure your book on the American governments. The judicious collection that you have made, with your just reflections thereon, have reached America at a great crisis, and will probably have their proper influence in forming the federal government now under consideration. Your labor may, therefore, have its reward in the thanks of this and future generations. The present federal system, however well calculated it might have been for its designed ends, if the States had done their duty, under the almost total neglect of that duty has been found quite inefficient and ineffectual. The government must be both legislative and executive, with the former power paramount to the State legislatures, in certain respects essential to federal purposes. I think there is no doubt but that this legislature will be recommended to consist of the triple balance, if I may use the expression to signify a com-

pound of the three simple forms acting independently, but forming a joint determination. The executive (which will be part of the legislative) to have more duration, and power enlarged beyond the present. This seems to be the plan expected, and generally spoken of. I say expected, because the Convention is yet sitting, and will continue so to do until the middle of this month. I was appointed to that Assembly, but being a member of Congress, where the plan of Convention must be approved, there appeared an inconsistency for members of the former to have session in the latter, and so pass judgment at New York upon their opinion at Philadelphia. I therefore declined going to Convention, and came here, where we have lately contracted for the sale of six millions of acres, on the north-western side of Ohio, in the ceded territory, for lessening the domestic debt. And now, another offer is made for two millions more. I hope we shall at least be able to extinguish the domestic debt created by the late war, which is by far the greatest part of the debt. So many of our members have lately gone from hence to the Convention, that we have had but five States in Congress for a month past, which has prevented any determination on your application to return. It seems at present to be very doubtful whether there will be any resident appointed to the Court where you are; some being for a minister, some for a chargé, and some for neither, but a consul only. How it will terminate can scarcely be conjectured yet.

ARTHUR LEE TO JOHN ADAMS.

New York, 8 October, 1787.

I inclose you the long expected production of the Convention. I am inclined to think you will deem it somewhat too aristocratic. An oligarchy, however, I think, will spring from it in the persons of the President and the Vice-President, who, if they understand one another, will easily govern the two Houses to their will. The omission of a Declaration of Rights, the appointment of a Vice-President, whose sole business seems to be to intrigue, securing trial by jury in criminal cases only,

making the federal court original instead of appellant, and that in the case of a citizen of any State and one of another, and of a foreigner with the citizen of any State, the omission of a council, and vesting legislative, executive and judicial powers in the Senate, the making this Senate counsellors to the President, and judges on his impeachment, which may happen to be for the very thing they have advised, are errors, if errors, gross as a mountain. I say, if errors, for I am very much inclined to believe they were designed.

Congress having three States represented by those who were members of Convention, and three of the most influential, each in three other States, resolved to send it on without any recommendation, because its opponents insisted upon having their reasons on the journals, if they offered to recommend it. The States present were New Hampshire, two Convention men, Massachusetts, two Convention, one not, Connecticut, one Convention, one not, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, one Convention, three not, North Carolina, one Convention, one not, South Carolina, one Convention, one not, Georgia, two Convention. Pennsylvania has ordered the State Convention to meet on the 3d of November to determine on its adoption. All the other assemblies will direct Conventions when they meet. From the present appearance of things, it seems probable it will become our Constitution just as it is. No opposition is declared to it but in Virginia, where it will be opposed, I imagine, by the Governor, Richard Henry Lee, Mr. Mason, and Mr. Henry. In this State, the Governor and all his friends are in opposition. I wish it may be amended, and cannot see why it should not.

My brother, R. H. Lee, is here, and desires to be affectionately remembered to you. Please to remember me to Mrs. Adams, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and to my nephews, to whom I have not time to write. Adieu.

A. Lee.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Braintree, 2 December, 1788.

A multiplicity of avocations have prevented me from answering your friendly letter of the 2d of July, till I am almost ashamed to answer it at all. Your congratulations on my arrival and kind reception are very agreeable, because I know them to be sincere. Your compliments upon my poor volumes are consolatory, because they give me grounds to hope that they may have done some good. It is an opinion here, that they contributed somewhat to restore a permanent tranquillity to this commonwealth, as well as to suppress the pestilent county conventions, insurrections, and rebellion. And if I could be flattered into the belief that they contributed to the formation or ratification of a balanced national government for the United States, I should sing my *nunc dimittis* with much pleasure. If any one will show me a single example where the laws were respected, and liberty, property, life or character secure, without a balance in the Constitution, I might venture to give up the controversy. And if any one will show that there ever was a balance, or ever can be a balance for three days together, without three branches, and no more, I might also give up the point.

I have heard nothing of the second and third volumes in the southern and middle States, and know not whether they have been read or how received. For the third volume I was most anxious, as it was the boldest and freest, and most likely to be unpopular.

Whether your expectation, that I shall be in the new government, proceeds from your partiality to your old friend, or from your knowledge of the sentiments of the nation, I know not. The choice will be in the breasts of freemen, and if it falls upon me, it will most certainly be a free election.

You tell me my labors are only beginning. Seven-and-twenty years have I labored in this rugged vineyard, and am now arrived at an age when man sighs for repose.

My dear Mrs. Adams is with her only daughter at Long Island. We have three sons, two at college, and one with an eminent lawyer. They are regular in their manners and studies, and give me so much satisfaction as to increase the regret I feel

at the remembrance of how much of their interests I have been obliged to sacrifice to the public service.

TO THOMAS BRAND-HOLLIS.

Braintree, 8 December, 1788.

If I had been told at my first arrival, that five months would pass before I should write a line to Mr. Brand-Hollis, I should not have believed it. I found my estate, in consequence of a total neglect and inattention on my part for fourteen years, was falling to decay, and in so much disorder as to require my whole attention to repair it. I have a great mind to essay a description of it. It is not large, in the first place. It is but the farm of a patriot. But there are in it two or three spots, from whence are to be seen some of the most beautiful prospects in the world. I wish the Hyde was within ten miles, or that Mr. Brand-Hollis would come and build a Hyde near us. I have a fine meadow that I would christen by the name of Hollis Mead, if it were not too small. The hill where I now live is worthy to be called Hollis Hill; but as only a small part of the top of it belongs to me, it is doubtful whether it would succeed. There is a fine brook, through a meadow, by my house; shall I call it Hollis Brook?

What shall I say to you of our public affairs? The increase of population is wonderful. The plenty of provisions of all kinds amazing, and cheap in proportion to their abundance and the scarcity of money, which is certainly very great. The agriculture, fisheries, manufactures, and commerce of the country are very well, much better than I expected to find them. I cannot say so much of our politics. The *constancy* of the people in a course of annual elections has discarded from their confidence almost all the old, stanch, firm patriots, who conducted the revolution in all the civil departments, and has called to the helm pilots much more selfish and much less skilful. I cannot, however, lay all the blame of this upon the people. Many of my brother patriots have flattered the people, by telling them they had virtue, wisdom, and talents, which the

people themselves have found out by experience they had not, and this has disgusted them with their flatterers. The elections for the new government have been determined very well, hitherto, in general. You may have the curiosity to ask what share your friend is to have. I really am at a loss to guess. The probability at present seems to be, that I shall have no lot in it. I am in the habit of *balancing* every thing. In one scale is vanity, in the other comfort. Can you doubt which will preponderate? In public life I have found nothing but the former, in private life I have enjoyed much of the latter.

I regret the loss of the book-shops, and the society of the few men of letters that I knew in London; in all other respects I am much better accommodated here. Shall I hope to hear from you as you have leisure? A letter left at the New England Coffee House will be brought me by some of our Boston captains.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

New York, 20 May, 1789.

I last night received your friendly letter of March the 5th, and am happy to find that I have a place in your remembrance. There are few portions of my life that I recollect with more entire satisfaction than the hours I spent at Hackney, under your ministry, and in private society, and conversation with you at other places. The approbation you are pleased to express of my speculations on the subject of government, is peculiarly agreeable to me, because it goes a great way to convince me that the end I had in view has been in some degree answered, and will be more so. It was not to obtain a name as an author, or a reputation for literary talents, that I undertook the laborious work. If such had been my object, I certainly should have taken more time to digest and connect it. But it appeared to me, that my countrymen were running wild, and into danger, from a too ardent and inconsiderate pursuit of erroneous opinions of government, which had been propagated among them by some of their ill informed favorites, and by various writings which were very popular among them, such as

the pamphlet called Common Sense, for one example, among many others; particularly Mrs. Macaulay's History, Mr. Burgh's Political Disquisitions, Mr. Turgot's letters. These writings are all excellent in some respects, and very useful, but extremely mistaken in the true construction of a free government. To accomplish the good I had in view, I thought it would be more useful and effectual, to lay facts, principles, examples, and reasonings before my countrymen, from the writings of others, than in my own name. This has given an air of pedantry to the books, which I despise; but it has answered the end in a manner more effectual than if I had contrived it with more art to promote my own reputation. Our new Constitution is formed, in part, upon its principles, and the enlightened part of our communities are generally convinced of the necessity of adopting it, by degrees, more completely.

Your monthly reviewers thought themselves very sagacious in conjecturing that I had a point to carry! They will now, I suppose, glorify themselves in the belief that their conjecture was right, and that I have carried my point. Shrewd, however, as they think themselves, they are mistaken. Had my books been contrived for any selfish purpose, they would have certainly been modelled in a more popular manner. If those writings have contributed to procure me the confidence of my fellow-citizens, I shall rejoice in them the more as a sure proof that they have convinced many already, and that they will continue to operate a complete reformation of every thing yet wrong, and produce in the end what I think the most perfect form of government. I am now very happy with our illustrious chief and many of my old friends, and firmly trust in the goodness of Providence for aids to accomplish the great work of forming institutions for a great continent, which may leave them their liberty and happiness for many generations.

TO HENRY MARCHANT.

New York, 18 August, 1789

I have received your kind and obliging letter of the 16th of July, and am sorry that the extreme heat of the weather, and a

constant attendance on the duties of an office which is somewhat laborious and fatiguing, have prevented my giving it an earlier answer. The approbation you are pleased to express of my public conduct, is a great satisfaction to me. It is true that I have run through a course of dangers, hardships, and fatigues, by sea and land, and a series of perplexed negotiations among various nations, and at different courts, which have never fallen to the lot of any other American, and scarcely to any other man. But although I may flatter myself that under the favor of Heaven I have had as much success as could have been rationally expected, yet I find myself obliged with you to lament that our countrymen have not availed themselves of the advantages which Providence has placed in their power. After a generous contest for liberty, of twenty years' continuance, Americans forgot wherein liberty consisted. After a bloody war in defence of property, they forgot that property was sacred. After an arduous struggle for the freedom of commerce, they voluntarily shackled it with arbitrary trammels. After fighting for justice as the end of government, they seemed determined to banish that virtue from the earth. Rhode Island has carried all these errors to their extremes, but there is not any State in the Union which is wholly free from the same mistakes. I should denominate this conduct guilty as well as erroneous, if I were not sensible that it has been owing to the loss of that balance in our government which can alone preserve wisdom or virtue in society. The whole continent seems at present sensible that much has been wrong, and desirous of reformation. But there are obstacles in the way, among which the unnatural conduct of Rhode Island is not the least. You will add greatly to your merits towards your country by your exertions to bring your fellow-citizens into a right way of thinking in this respect.

It is very true that several of those loose conjectures of an imagination, wandering into futurity, which you are pleased to dignify with the magnificent appellation of "prophetic declarations," have been brought to pass in a singular manner, for some of which I had much less reason to offer than for that which has not been accomplished relative to yourself. This, however, is still not impossible, nor perhaps improbable. The solemn declaration, which you call prophetic, and say has come to pass, made on the floor of Congress, respecting the late confederation, just

as we had closed it, I do not distinctly recollect. I should be much obliged to you if you would write me as particular an account of it as you can recollect.[1] *Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.*

I must now thank you for your polite and friendly attention to my family when at Newport. They speak with much gratitude of the civilities they received both there and at Providence, and we live in hopes of seeing you in Senate before another year is completed.

TO SILVANUS BOURN.

New York, 30 August, 1789.

I have received your letter of the 18th of this month, and have communicated that to the President which was inclosed in it. The particular office you solicit by that letter will be sought by numbers, and among them probably will be men advanced in life, encumbered with large families, in necessitous circumstances perhaps occasioned by public services, by depreciated public promises, &c. The President will, as he ought, weigh all these particulars, and give the preference upon the whole as justice, humanity, and wisdom shall dictate. There is another gentleman who has applied for it, whose pretensions, perhaps, will have great weight, and will be supported by recommendations of the first sort.

I must caution you, my dear Sir, against having any dependence on my influence or that of any other person. No man, I believe, has influence with the President. He seeks information from all quarters, and judges more independently than any man I ever knew. It is of so much importance to the public that he should preserve this superiority, that I hope I shall never see the time that any man will have influence with him beyond the powers of reason and argument.

Who is it, pray, that has been honoring Vice in poetry?

[1] See vol. iii. p. 70, note.

TO JAMES SULLIVAN.

New York, 17 September, 1789.

In your letter of the 18th of August, you ask why we may not have as much paper in circulation in proportion to our circulating silver and gold, as Great Britain has in proportion to hers. Give me leave to answer you without hesitation. We may, as soon as we shall have any credit. We have none. No man of common sense will trust us. As long as an unlimited democracy tyrannized over the rich, no man of property was safe. If ever an unlimited aristocracy shall tyrannize over the poor and the moderately rich at once, the greater portion of society will not dare to trust the less. But if a government well ordered, mixed, and counterpoised should take place, and in consequence of it the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," be observed, then and not till then you may circulate what paper you may find necessary. But I doubt very much whether our circumstances will require any paper at all. The cash paid in imposts will immediately be paid to creditors, and by them circulated in society.

TO MARSTON WATSON.

Braintree, 7 November, 1789.

The letter you did me the honor to write me on the 30th of September has been to New York, and from thence transmitted to this place; but it never reached my hand till the night before last. The sentiments of esteem for my private character, expressed by gentlemen who are probably strangers to me, are very obliging, and the approbation of my public conduct abroad lays me under still greater obligations.

The fisheries are so essential to the commerce and naval power of this nation, that it is astonishing that any one citizen should ever have been found indifferent about them. But it is certain that at a time when there were reasons to expect that more than one foreign nation would endeavor to deprive us of

them, there were many Americans indifferent, and not a few even disposed to give them away. A knowledge of this was the first and strongest motive with me to embark for Europe a first and a second time. After all, however, the final preservation of the fisheries was owing to causes so providential, that I can never look back upon them without reverence and emotion. Your approbation, Sir, and that of your friends, of the part I acted in that negotiation, give me great pleasure.

The present of four boxes of fish has been received in my absence by my family; and is in every point of view very acceptable to me. As an amateur, I shall regale myself and my friends; as a wellwisher to the trade, I shall endeavor to make the dish fashionable at New York. I pray you and your companions to accept of my sincere thanks for the favor, and my best wishes for their pleasure, profit, and prosperity in the prosecution of the fisheries. May you and they live to see a commerce and a naval power growing out of your occupations, which shall render this the first and most respectable of maritime nations!

TO RICHARD PRICE.

New York, 19 April, 1790.

My dear Friend, — Accept of my best thanks for your favor of February 1st, and the excellent discourse[1] that came with it. I love the zeal and the spirit which dictated this discourse, and admire the general sentiments of it. From the year 1760 to this hour, the whole scope of my life has been to support such principles and propagate such sentiments. No sacrifices of myself or my family, no dangers, no labors, have been too much for me in this great cause. The revolution in France could not therefore be indifferent to me; but I have learned by awful experience to rejoice with trembling. I know that encyclopedists and economists, Diderot and D'Alembert, Voltaire and Rousseau, have contributed to this great event more than Sidney, Locke, or Hoadley, perhaps more than the American revo-

[1] On the Love of Country. This sermon was the occasion of Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution.

lution; and I own to you, I know not what to make of a republic of thirty million atheists. The Constitution is but an experiment, and must and will be altered. I know it to be impossible that France should be long governed by it. If the sovereignty is to reside in one assembly, the king, princes of the blood, and principal quality, will govern it at their pleasure as long as they can agree; when they differ, they will go to war, and act over again all the tragedies of Valois, Bourbons, Lorraines, Guises, and Colignis, two hundred years ago. The Greeks sung the praises of Harmodius and Aristogiton for restoring equal laws. Too many Frenchmen, after the example of too many Americans, pant for equality of persons and property. The impracticability of this, God Almighty has decreed, and the advocates for liberty, who attempt it, will surely suffer for it.

I thank you, Sir, for your kind compliment. As it has been the great aim of my life to be useful, if I had any reason to think I was so, as you seem to suppose, it would make me happy. For "eminence" I care nothing; for though I pretend not to be exempt from ambition, or any other human passion, I have been convinced from my infancy and have been confirmed every year and day of my life, that the mechanic and peasant are happier than any nobleman, or magistrate, or king, and that the higher a man rises, if he has any sense of duty, the more anxious he must be. Our new government is an attempt to divide a sovereignty; a fresh essay at *imperium in imperio.* It cannot, therefore, be expected to be very stable or very firm. It will prevent us for a time from drawing our swords upon each other, and when it will do that no longer, we must call a new Convention to reform it. The difficulty of bringing millions to agree in any measures, to act by any rule, can never be conceived by him who has not tried it. It is incredible how small is the number, in any nation, of those who comprehend any system of constitution or administration, and those few it is wholly impossible to unite. I am a sincere inquirer after truth, but I find very few who discover the same truths. The king of Prussia has found one which has also fallen in my way. "That it is the peculiar quality of the human understanding, that example should correct no man. The blunders of the father are lost to his children, and every generation must commit its own." I

have never sacrificed my judgment to kings, ministers, nor people, and I never will. When either shall see as I do, I shall rejoice in their protection, aid, and honor; but I see no prospect that either will ever think as I do, and therefore I shall never be a favorite with either. I do not desire to be; but I sincerely wish and devoutly pray, that a hundred years of civil wars may not be the portion of all Europe for want of a little attention to the true elements of the science of government. With sentiments, moral sentiments, which are and must be eternal, I am your friend, &c.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

New York, 18 April, 1790.

Your letter of April 13th soars above the visible, diurnal sphere. I own to you that avarice, ambition, the love of fame, &c., are all mysterious passions. They are the greatest absurdities, delusions, and follies that can be imagined, if in this life only we had hope. In the boat, on our return from Point-no-Point, the principal topic of conversation was independence. My sentiments on this head were no secret in Congress from May, 1775. An intercepted letter early in 1775 had informed the world that I was for independence. But I was left too much alone. The company in the boat appeared to me then and ever since to have invited me to be of their party that they might all assure me in that confidential manner that they were of my mind and would ultimately support me. There was not one of the company, I believe, who in the course of the passage did not repeatedly assure me that in his opinion we must be independent. That evening's conversation was a great comfort to me ever after.

How many follies and indiscreet speeches do your minutes in your note-book bring to my recollection, which I had forgotten forever! Alas! I fear I am not yet much more prudent Your character of Mr. Paine is very well and very just. To the accusation against me which you have recorded in your note-book of the 17th of March last, I plead not guilty. I deny an

attachment to monarchy, and I deny that I have changed my principles since 1776. No letter of mine to Mr. Hooper was ever printed that I know of. Indeed, I have but a very confused recollection of having ever written him any letter. If any letter has been printed in my name, I desire to see it. You know that a letter of mine to Mr. Wythe was printed by Dunlap, in January, 1776, under the title of "Thoughts on Government, in a letter from a gentleman to his friend." In that pamphlet I recommended a legislature in three independent branches, and to such a legislature I am still attached. But I own that at that time I understood very little of the subject, and, if I had changed my opinions, should have no scruple to avow it. I own that awful experience has concurred with reading and reflection, to convince me that Americans are more rapidly disposed to corruption in elections that I thought they were fourteen years ago.

My friend Dr. Rush will excuse me, if I caution him against a fraudulent use of the words *monarchy* and *republic*. I am a mortal and irreconcilable enemy to monarchy. I am no friend to *hereditary limited* monarchy in America. This I know can never be admitted without an hereditary Senate to control it, and a hereditary nobility or Senate in America I know to be unattainable and impracticable. I should scarcely be for it, if it were. Do not, therefore, my friend, misunderstand me and misrepresent me to posterity. I am for a balance between the legislative and executive powers, and I am for enabling the executive to be at all times capable of maintaining the balance between the Senate and House, or in other words, between the aristocratical and democratical interests. Yet I am for having all three branches elected at stated periods, and these elections, I hope, will continue until the people shall be convinced that fortune, providence, or chance, call it which you will, is better than election. If the time should come when corruption shall be added to intrigue and manœuvre in elections, and produce civil war, then, in my opinion, chance will be better than choice for all but the House of Representatives.

Accept my thanks for your polite and obliging invitation to Philadelphia. Nothing would give me more pleasure than such a visit; but I must deny myself that satisfaction. I know I have friends in Pennsylvania, and such as I esteem very much

as friends of virtue, liberty, and good government. What you mean by "more than British degrees of corruption" at New York, and by "sophisticated government," I know not. The continent is a kind of whispering gallery, and acts and speeches are reverberated round from New York in all directions. The report is very loud at a distance, when the whisper is very gentle in the centre. But if you see such corruption in your countrymen, on what do you found your hopes? I lament the deplorable condition of my country, which seems to be under such a fatality that the people can agree upon nothing. When they seem to agree, they are so unsteady that it is but for a moment. That changes may be made for the better, is probable. I know of no change that would occasion much danger, but that of President. I wish very heartily that a change of Vice-President could be made to-morrow. I have been too ill-used in the office to be fond of it; — if I had not been introduced into it in a manner that made it a disgrace. I will never serve in it again upon such terms. Though I have acted in public with immense multitudes, I have had few friends, and those certainly not interested ones. These I shall love in public or private. Adieu.

TO ALEXANDER JARDINE.

New York, 1 June, 1790.

I take the opportunity by General Mansell to acknowledge the receipt of your polite letter of the 29th May, 1789, and to present you my thanks for the valuable present of your entertaining travels.[1] Your compliments upon so hasty a production as my book, are very flattering. It would give me pleasure to pursue the subject through all the known governments, and to correct or rather new-make the whole work. But my life is destined to labor of a much less agreeable kind. I know not how it is, but mankind have an aversion to the study of the science of government. Is it because the subject is dry? To me, no romance is more entertaining. Those who take the lead in revolutions are seldom well informed, and they commonly

[1] Letters from Barbary, France, Spain, Portugal, &c., in two volumes.

take more pains to inflame their own passions and those of society, than to discover truth; and very few of those who have just ideas have the courage to pursue them. I know by experience that in revolutions the most fiery spirits and flighty geniuses frequently obtain more influence than men of sense and judgment, and the weakest men may carry foolish measures in opposition to wise ones proposed by the ablest. France is in great danger from this quarter. The desire of change in Europe is not wonderful. Abuses in religion and government are so numerous and oppressive to the people, that a reformation must take place, or a general decline. The armies of monks, soldiers, and courtiers were become so numerous and costly, that the labor of the rest was not enough to maintain them. Either reformation or depopulation must come.

I am so well satisfied of my own principles, that I think them as eternal and unchangeable as the earth and its inhabitants. I know mankind must finally adopt a balance between the executive and legislative powers, and another balance between the poor and the rich in the legislature, and quarrel till they come to that conclusion. But how long they must quarrel before they agree in the inference, I know not.

TO THOMAS BRAND-HOLLIS.

New York, 1 June, 1790.

Nothing mortifies me more than the difficulty I find to maintain that correspondence with you, which, when I left England, I thought would be some consolation to me for the loss of your conversation.

We proceed by degrees to introduce a little order into this country, and my public duties require so much of my time that I have little left for private friendships, however dear to me. By General Mansell I send you a small packet which will give you some idea of our proceedings. The French seem to be very zealous to follow our example. I wish they may not too exactly copy our greatest errors, and suffer in consequence of them greater misfortunes than ours. They will find themselves under

a necessity of treading back some of their too nasty steps, as we have done.

I am situated on the majestic banks of the Hudson, in comparison of which your Thames is but a rivulet, and surrounded with all the beauties and sublimities of nature. Never did I live in so delightful a spot. I would give, what would I not give to see you here? Your library and your cabinets of elegant and costly curiosities would be an addition to such a situation, which in this country would attract the attention of all. In Europe they are lost in the crowd. Come over and purchase a paradise here, and be the delight and admiration of a new world. Marry one of our fine girls, and leave a family to do honor to human nature, when you can do it no longer in person. Franklin is no more, and we have lately trembled for Washington. Thank God, he has recovered from a dangerous sickness and is likely now to continue many years. His life is of vast importance for us. Is there any probability of a fermentation in England, sufficient to carry off any of her distempers? I wish her happy and prosperous, but I wish she would adopt the old maxim, "Live and let live." Will there be a complete revolution in Europe, both in religion and government? Where will the present passions and principles lead, and in what will they end? In more freedom and humanity, I am clear. But when or how? My affectionate regards to Dr. Price, and all our good friends; and believe me yours *dum spiro*, &c.

Rhode Island is to become one of us, on the 29th May.

TO THOMAS BRAND-HOLLIS.

New York, 11 June, 1790.

I have received your kind letter of March 29th, and the packet of pamphlets, and I pray you to accept of my best thanks for both. I sent you lately, by General Mansell, some of our rough matters. The boxes of books you sent by Captain Bernard, arrived safely, I know. You seem to suppose our coast in danger from African pirates. In this I presume you are de-

ceived by the artifices of the London insurance offices, for we are in no more danger than the empire of China is. The great revolution in France is wonderful, but not supernatural. The hand of Providence is in it, I doubt not, working, however, by natural and ordinary means, such as produced the reformation in religion in the sixteenth century. That all men have one common nature, is a principle which will now universally prevail, and equal rights and equal duties will in a just sense, I hope, be inferred from it. But equal ranks and equal property never can be inferred from it, any more than equal understanding, agility, vigor, or beauty. Equal laws are all that ever can be derived from human equality. I am delighted with Doctor Price's sermon on patriotism; but there is a sentiment or two which I should explain a little. He guards his hearers and readers very judiciously against the extreme of adulation and contempt. "The former is the extreme," he says, "to which mankind in general have been most prone." The generality of rulers have treated men as your English jockeys treat their horses, convinced them first that they were their masters, and next that they were their friends; at least they have pretended to do so. Mankind have, I agree, behaved too much like horses; been rude, wild, and mad, until they were mastered, and then been too tame, gentle, and dull. I think our friend should have stated it thus: The great and perpetual distinction in civilized societies, has been between the rich, who are few, and the poor, who are many. When the many are masters, they are too unruly, and then the few are too tame, and afraid to speak out the truth. When the few are masters, they are too severe, and then the many are too servile. This is the strict truth. The few have had most art and union, and therefore have generally prevailed in the end. The inference of wisdom from these premises is, that neither the poor nor the rich should ever be suffered to be masters. They should have equal power to defend themselves; and that their power may be always equal, there should be an independent mediator between them, always ready, always able, and always interested to assist the weakest. Equal laws can never be made or maintained without this balance. You see I still hold fast my scales, and weigh every thing in them. The French must finally become my disciples, or rather the disciples of Zeno, or they will have no equal laws, no personal liberty, no property, no lives.

I am very much employed in business, and this must be my apology for neglecting so much to write to you; but I will be as good a correspondent as I can. I hope you will not forget your old friend. In this country the pendulum has vibrated too far to the popular side, driven by men without experience or judgment, and horrid ravages have been made upon property by arbitrary multitudes or majorities of multitudes. France has severe trials to endure from the same cause. Both have found, or will find, that to place property at the mercy of a majority who have no property, is "*committere agnum lupo.*" My fundamental maxim of government is, never to trust the lamb to the custody of the wolf. If you are not perfectly of my mind at present, I hereby promise and assure you that you will live to see that I am precisely right. Thus arrogantly concludes your assured friend.

TO THOMAS WELSH.

New York, 13 September, 1790.

My dear Dr. Welsh, — I received your letter before my departure for Philadelphia, but had not time to answer it. It is not probable that any special agents will be employed in the business you had in contemplation. The board consists of men who will study economy in that as well as in all other affairs committed to their charge, and therefore the loan officers or collectors, or some other known character, will have this additional duty annexed to him without any other reward than the honor of it, as I suppose. I have much satisfaction in finding my son in your family. What the conjunctions and oppositions of two such political planets may produce, I know not. Politics are bred in the bones of both of you; but your good example will teach him, I hope, to take politics by way of amusement or spectacle, without ever suffering their interference with your professions. I recollect the painful years I suffered from 1758, when I was sworn at Boston, to the year 1761, too perfectly not to sympathize with John. Do not let him flatter himself with hopes of a run of business, which is neither to be expected, nor

would be beneficial. His business is to study and be constant to his office, and in court. Causes and clients will come soon enough for his benefit, if he does that. "My knowledge of the law cost me seven years' hard study in that great chair," said John Read, who had as great a genius and became as eminent as any man. "Attend to the study of the law rather than the gain of it," said my master Gridley to me; and I recollect the precept with sufficient pleasure to recommend it to any of my sons. I can ill afford to maintain my sons at their studies, but I had rather do that than have them overwhelmed with a run of business, at first, which must put an end to their studies. If a father's partiality has not deceived me very much, John is as great a scholar as this country has produced at his age, and I know he possesses a spirit that will not stoop to dishonorable practice or conduct. I am therefore perfectly at ease in my mind about his success. Whether his reputation spreads this year, or two or three years hence, is indifferent to me, provided his anxiety does not injure his health. I have seen too many flashing insects in my day glitter and glare for a moment, and then disappear, to wish that my sons may add to the number.

TO JOHN TRUMBULL.

Philadelphia, 23 January, 1791.

I have been so much of an anti-economist, as to leave your letter of June the 5th unanswered to this day. "The Defence of the American Constitutions" is not, I apprehend, a "misnomer." Had the patriots of Amsterdam repulsed the duke of Brunswick from the Harlaem gate, a history of the action might have properly been called an "account of the defence of Amsterdam," although the city on the side of the Leyden gate and Utrecht gate had been so ill fortified as to have been indefensible, had the Prussian attack been made on either of these quarters. My three volumes are a defence of the American Constitutions on that side on which they are attacked. Mr. Turgot attacked them for aiming at three orders and a balance. I defended them in this point only. Had he attacked them for

not making their orders distinct and independent enough, or for not making their balances complete, I should have been the last man in the world to have undertaken their defence. If another edition should ever be published, I would insert in the title page: "A defence, &c., against the attack of M. Turgot." This, I apprehend, would cure all defects in point of title. But, as you observe, the feelings of mankind are so much against any rational theory, that I find my labor has all been in vain, and it is not worth while to take any more pains upon the subject. The rivalry between the State governments and the National government, is growing daily more active and ardent. Thirteen strong men, embracing thirteen pillars at once, and bowing themselves in concert, will easily pull down a frail edifice. If the superiority of the national government is not more clearly acknowledged, we shall soon be in a confusion which we shall not get out of for twenty years. There was never more occasion for firmness in all who wish in sincerity for peace, liberty, or safety.

The Secretary of the Treasury is all that you think him. There is no office in the government better filled. It is unhappy that New York has taken away one of his supports. Your sentiments of other characters, and of measures in general, appear to me to be so just that I cannot but wish that you had more to do in public affairs. But they say that you "love wit better than your friend," and although I do not believe this, I expect from you for this piece of information, by way of revenge, a sheet or two of their sarcasms upon me. I know that although the ridiculous can never escape your observation in a friend or an enemy, yet you love the former and have no ill will against the latter. The independence of your fame and fortune, and your happiness in private life, are more to be envied than any public office or station. For myself, I find the office I hold, though laborious, so wholly insignificant, and, from the blind policy of that part of the world from whence I came, so stupidly pinched and betrayed, that I wish myself again at the bar, old as I am. My own situation is almost the only one in the world, in which firmness and patience are useless. I have derived so much pleasure from your correspondence, that, notwithstanding the long interruption of it, I hope you will not deny it in future to your friend and humble servant.

TO HANNAH ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 10 March, 1791.

I have this day received your obliging letter of the 21st of February, including a copy of a proposed dedication. Your request of my permission to dedicate to me the second edition of your View of Religions, is very flattering to me, because, although I am ashamed to acknowledge I have never seen the book, I know its reputation to be very respectable, not only in this country, but in Europe. Although I am conscious that some of the compliments intended me have not been so well merited as I wish they had been, I shall leave to your inclination and discretion every thing of that kind; only requesting that all titles, literary or political, may be omitted, and that the address may be only to John Adams, Vice-President of the United States of America. If you please, you may receive me into the list of your subscribers for three copies bound.

You and I are undoubtedly related by birth, although personally unknown to each other, and although we were both "born in humble obscurity," yet I presume neither of us has any cause to regret that circumstance. If I could ever suppose that family pride were any way excusable, I should think a descent from a line of virtuous, independent New England farmers for a hundred and sixty years, was a better foundation for it than a descent through royal or noble scoundrels ever since the flood.

I am, Miss Adams, very sincerely your well wisher.

TO JOSEPH WARD.

Philadelphia, 6 April, 1797.

I received yesterday your favor of the 27th of March, for which I thank you.

The strain of joy at a late event, and of panegyric on the subject of it, serve, among some other instances, to convince me that old friendships, when they are well preserved, become very

strong. The friends of my youth are generally gone; the friends of my early political life are chiefly departed; of the few that remain, some have been found on the late occasion, weak, envious, jealous, and spiteful, humiliated, and mortified, and duped enough by French finesse and Jacobinical rascality, to show it to me and to the world. Others have been found faithful and true, generous and manly. From these I have received letters and tokens of approbation and friendship, in a style of ardor, zeal, and exultation, similar to yours.

Your postscript is a morsel of exquisite beauty and utility. My life will undoubtedly depend in a great measure on my observance of it. The labor of my office is very constant and very severe, and before this time you will have seen enough to convince you that my prospects, as well as yours, are grave. I should be much obliged to you for your sentiments, and those of the people in general about you, concerning what ought to be done.

TO HENRY GUEST.

Philadelphia, 3 January, 1799.

I have just received your favor of the 1st of this month, and am much pleased that you think my answers to addresses patient, fatherly, and patriotic. I believe with you in the profound patriotism at the bottom of the hearts of our countrymen very universally. Clitus, I think, describes the ship in more danger than she is.

I received the panegyric on General Anchoret, and a political speech, and read them with pleasure.

The coat of mail, if it answers your description, must be a useful invention. Do you think the French will come here with their bayonets to pierce it?

I care very little what shall be written on my gravestone, only I hope it will tell no untruth. I like your epitaph as well as any.

> "Who British, French, and Moorish bribes withstood,
> Not for his own but for his country's good."

As I do not choose to correspond with any one who is ashamed of his correspondent, I shall certainly frank this letter, for to you it will not be worth the postage.

TO DR. OGDEN.

Washington, 3 December, 1800.

I have received, this evening, your favor of the 26th November, with the pamphlet inclosed.[1] I have run it over in more haste than it was written in, but am so far possessed of its purport as to be better pleased that it was written in thirty hours, than if it had been the elaborate production of a week, because it shows the first impressions of the writer upon reading the pamphlet it is an answer to. This last pamphlet I regret more on account of its author than on my own, because I am confident it will do him more harm than me. I am not his enemy, and never was. I have not adored him, like his idolaters, and have had great cause to disapprove of some of his politics. He has talents, if he would correct himself, which might be useful. There is more burnish, however, on the outside, than sterling silver in the substance. He threatened his master, Washington, sometimes with pamphlets upon his character and conduct, and Washington, who had more regard to his reputation than I have, I say it with humility and mortification, might be restrained by his threats, but I dread neither his menaces of pamphlets nor the execution of them. It would take a large volume to answer him completely. I have not time, and, if I had, I would not employ it in such a work, while I am in public office. The public indignation he has excited is punishment enough. I thank you, Sir, for this valuable present. I shall preserve it for my children.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.

Washington, 28 December, 1800.

I had last night your letter of the 12th, the friendly sentiments of which have tenderly affected me. The affliction in my family

[1] "A letter to Major-General Hamilton, by a Citizen."

from the melancholy death of a once beloved son, has been very great, and has required the consolation of religion, as well as philosophy, to enable us to support it. The prospects of that unfortunate youth were very pleasing and promising, but have been cut off, and a wife and two very young children are left with their grandparents to bewail a fate, which neither could avert, and to which all ought in patience to submit. I have two sons left, whose conduct is worthy of their education and connections. I pray that their lives may be spared and their characters respected.

Before this reaches you, the news will be familiar to you, that after the 3d of March I am to be a private citizen and your brother farmer. I shall leave the State with its coffers full, and the fair prospects of a peace with all the world smiling in its face, its commerce flourishing, its navy glorious, its agriculture uncommonly productive and lucrative. O, my country! May peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Washington, 30 December, 1800.

I have received your favor of the 18th. It has been an invariable usage these twelve years for the President to answer no letters of solicitation or recommendation to office; but with you, in full confidence, I will say, that it is uncertain whether I shall appoint any consuls to France. Mr. Lee is represented to me as a Jacobin, who was very busy in a late election in the town of Roxbury, on the wrong side. His pretensions, however, shall be considered with all others impartially, if I should make any appointments.

Your anxiety for the issue of the election is, by this time, allayed. How mighty a power is the spirit of party! How decisive and unanimous it is! Seventy-three for Mr. Jefferson and seventy-three for Mr. Burr. May the peace and welfare of the country be promoted by this result! But I see not the way as yet. In the case of Mr. Jefferson, there is nothing wonderful; but Mr. Burr's good fortune surpasses all ordinary rules, and

exceeds that of Bonaparte. All the old patriots, all the splendid talents, the long experience, both of federalists and antifederalists, must be subjected to the humiliation of seeing this dexterous gentleman rise, like a balloon, filled with inflammable air, over their heads. And this is not the worst. What a discouragement to all virtuous exertion, and what an encouragement to party intrigue, and corruption! What course is it we steer, and to what harbor are we bound? Say, man of wisdom and experience, for I am wholly at a loss.

I thank you, Sir, and Mrs. Gerry, for your kind condolence with us in our affliction, under a very melancholy and distressing bereavement. I thank the Supreme that I have yet two sons, who will give me some consolation by a perseverance in those habits of virtue and industry which they have hitherto preserved. There is nothing more to be said, but let the Eternal will be done!

CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN TO JOHN ADAMS.

Charleston, 11 March, 1801.

For five or six years past, at least, very rarely have I been seen from home, (or wished to be,) excepting at church or funerals; but my duty to my country and to our old standbys, though now in my seventy-eighth, compelled me in our late election to take up my feeble pen again, at least to show my good will and inclination; and though many able hands were not wanting, yet sorry am I to say, all our efforts failed.

Many well-earned honors have the United States conferred on you. Had they added one more, a second invitation to the Presidency, it would have been not only what your long, faithful, important, and useful services might have reasonably expected, as a public acknowledgment and concurrence with all the world in your able and successful discharge of your first appointment, and of all your many other important trusts, but also what, in my humble opinion, sound policy seemed to dictate. God grant that the recollection of your ungrateful treatment may not deter truly firm, virtuous men from venturing their names to be held up to the public on such elections! I

am not without my suspicions, that foreign meddlers must have had this deep political slyness in view.

Many of our new-comers cajoled and imposed upon by emissaries from without, and egged on by a numerous or rather innumerable tribe of young law-followers amongst ourselves, especially in the circuits, have brought on a strange renversement in our State. Our old-standers and independent men of long well-tried patriotism, sound understanding, and good property, have now in general very little influence in our public matters. Our too easy admittance of strangers has entangled us in this evil, and when or where it will end, God only knows!

But here, my dear Sir, I must confess my own credulity and shortsightedness, who was amongst the most zealous in that over-hasty and not sufficiently guarded step, which we now have great reason to lament as big with innumerable mischiefs. Our worthy deceased friend John Rutledge, looking farther, was for giving them every reasonable protection and encouragement, but for admitting only their sons born amongst us into such complete citizenship as to vote either at State or Congress elections; and when unsuccessful in this point, was then for extending the time to ten years at least. Had even this been carried, it would have given new-comers full time to look so deliberately about them, as greatly to have deterred and hindered all designing tamperers and deceivers in most of their infernal views and mischievous suggestions; and much better, in all probability, would this have been for the peace, safety, and lasting political security of both.

You must have heard of and admired the open, honorable behavior of General Pinckney in our State election; that he would listen to no proposals of composition whatever, but persisted, from first to last, to stand or fall with you. I know you cannot want any consolation in this matter beyond your own breast. The firm, well-grounded complacency there, is, I am sure, amply sufficient to dispense with any thing exterior.

Long have I been led to think our planet a mere bedlam, and the uncommonly extravagant ravings of our own times, especially for a few years past, and still in the highest rant, have greatly increased and confirmed that opinion. Look round our whirling globe, my friend, where you will, east, west, north, or south, where is the spot in which are not many thousands of

these mad lunatics? But not a few strong symptoms seem now loudly to proclaim that this terrible, catching epidemic cannot be far from its crisis; and when arrived there, our all knowing, unerring Physician, always mercifully producing good from evil, and setting to rights the mad, destructive freaks of mortals, will, it is to be hoped, in the present forlorn distresses interfere, and give such a favorable turn to the crisis, as to make this bedlam-commitment end in the cure of all its miserable captives. More and more happy, I bless God, do I every day feel myself to find that my passage over this life's Atlantic is almost gained, having been in soundings for some time, not far from my wished-for port, waiting only for a favorable breeze from our kind Savior to waft me to that pleasing and expected land for which I cheerfully and humbly hope.

Since our country will have it so, that Mr. Jefferson may discharge his four years' duty with as much faithfulness and steadiness as you have done, and as much to the public benefit; that in so doing he may have the constitutional assistance and countenance of every citizen of the Union; and that his public actions may be judged of with candor and generosity, without any captious hole-picking; and above all, that every tendency to our reharmonizing and keeping so may be cordially embraced and zealously forwarded by all ranks, and happily effected, is the constant, sincere, and heartfelt prayer of him who is with great respect and affection, dear Sir,

Your most obedient, &c.,

CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN.

TO SAMUEL DEXTER.

Quincy, 23 March, 1801.

I left Washington on the 4th, and arrived at Quincy on the 18th, having trotted the bogs five hundred miles. I found about a hundred loads of sea-weed in my barnyard, and, recollecting Horace's

"Et genus et virtus, nisi cum re, vilior alga est,"

I thought I had made a good exchange, if Ulysses is an orthodox authority in this case, which I do not believe, of honors and

virtues for manure. I have more reason than Ulysses to inquire of Tiresias, or some other prophet,

> "quibus amissas reparare queam res
> Artibus atque modis."

I shall not, however, most certainly take the measures recommended by Tiresias. The fifth and sixth satires of the second book of Horace have much good matter applicable to me. If you will read them, it will save me the trouble of writing, and you of reading much which I might commit to paper concerning myself.

All is still as night in this region. My respects to the President, and compliments to Messrs. Madison, Lincoln, Dearborn, and love to Mr. Stoddert. Pray Mrs. Dexter to accept the kind regards of my family, and you will do me a favor by letting me hear of your welfare.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Quincy, 24 March, 1801.

I have received your favor of March 8th, with the letter inclosed, for which I thank you.[1] Inclosed is a letter to one of your domestics, Joseph Dougherty.

Had you read the papers inclosed, they might have given you a moment of melancholy, or, at least, of sympathy with a mourning father. They related wholly to the funeral of a son, who was once the delight of my eyes, and a darling of my heart, cut off in the flower of his days, amidst very flattering prospects, by causes which have been the greatest grief of my heart, and the deepest affliction of my life. It is not possible that any thing of the kind should happen to you, and I sincerely wish you may never experience any thing in any degree resembling it.

This part of the Union is in a state of perfect tranquillity, and I see nothing to obscure your prospect of a quiet and prosperous administration, which I heartily wish you.

With great respect, &c.

[1] "Th. Jefferson presents his respects to Mr. Adams, and incloses him a letter which came to his hands last night. On reading what is written within the cover, he concluded it to be a private letter, and without opening a single paper within it, he folded it up, and now has the honor to inclose it to Mr. Adams, with the homage of his high consideration and respect." Washington, 8 March, 1801.

TO BENJAMIN STODDERT.

Quincy, 31 March, 1801.

On the evening of the 18th, a few minutes after my arrival at this place, commenced a violent equinoctial gale of wind, accompanied with a flood of rain, from the north-east, which has continued, with very short intervals, to this day, and confined me to my house. This is so old fashioned a storm, that I begin to hope that nature is returning to her old good-nature and good-humor, and is substituting fermentations in the elements for revolutions in the moral, intellectual, and political world. I can give you no information of the politics of this State, having had little opportunity to converse with any of the knowing ones.

We know nothing with any certainty of the acts of our Executive at Washington; who are to go out, and who to come in; whether the Virginia system is to be a copy of that of Pennsylvania, or whether it will be original. Appointments of Mr. Dallas and Mr. Dawson are announced, and as these characters are not held in great veneration here, they are not much admired. We federalists are much in the situation of the party of Bolingbroke and Harley, after the treaty of Utrecht, completely and totally routed and defeated. We are not yet attainted by act of Congress, and, I hope, shall not fly out into rebellion. No party, that ever existed, knew itself so little, or so vainly overrated its own influence and popularity, as ours. None ever understood so ill the causes of its own power, or so wantonly destroyed them. If we had been blessed with common sense, we should not have been overthrown by Philip Freneau, Duane, Callender, Cooper, and Lyon, or their great patron and protector. A group of foreign liars, encouraged by a few ambitious native gentlemen, have discomfited the education, the talents, the virtues, and the property of the country. The reason is, we have no Americans in America. The federalists have been no more Americans than the anties.

Your time is too precious to be wasted in idle correspondences; but, if you have a moment to spare, you will oblige me by giving me news of your welfare. My family present their high regards to yours. I have not seen any of the attacks upon

you, nor any of your defence. Indeed, I have no great anxiety or curiosity to know the productions of malevolence. I am, and ever shall be, I believe, world without end, your friend, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Quincy, 6 April, 1801.

I have received from Mr. Pichon your favor of the 10th of January, and, while I feel my obligations to you for your kind remembrance of me, I very heartily rejoice with you in your return to your native country. The new superintendent of the commercial relations between France and the United States, will, I presume, be very well received here, and the better by most men for the part he acted in Holland, in promoting the late negotiation.

"I live" also "with my family in a rural, solitary place of retirement," after an uninterrupted toil of six-and-twenty years in the service of the public. Like you, also, "I preserve the love, the doctrines, and the independence of true liberty." It is a lamentable truth, that mankind has always been ill treated by government, and a most unfortunate circumstance, which renders the evil totally desperate, is, that they are never so ill used as when they take the government into their own hands. The doctrines of *sans-culotte*ism are productive of more plagues than those of Sir Robert Filmer, while they last.

I am glad you are on good terms with your principal deliverer from Olmutz, who did honor to his own head and heart by his wise and generous conduct upon that occasion. How extraordinary that character! Is it not unique? As it has been my fortune to conduct a negotiation with him, I may, without offence, wish him a greater glory than ever yet fell to the lot of any conqueror before him, that of giving peace to Europe, and liberty and good government to France.

Your country by adoption has grown and prospered since you saw it. You would scarcely know it, if you should make it a visit. It would be a great pleasure to the farmer of Stony field to take you by the hand in his little *chaumière*.

Mrs. Adams, who is all the family I have, joins me in respectful attachment to you and your lady and family. With great regard, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN.

Quincy, 16 April, 1801.

I have received your favor of the 11th of March, and, with a pleasure far exceeding all my powers of expression, perceive that your friendly sentiments for me are as kind and indulgent as they were six-and-twenty years ago. I read with the same satisfaction your publication last fall, and with a tenderness which was almost too much for my sensibility. While Wythe and Pendleton, and McKean, and Clinton, and Gates, and Osgood, and many others I could name, were arrayed in political hostility against their old friend, Gadsden was almost the only stanch old companion, who was faithful found. What is the reason that so many of our "old standbys" are infected with Jacobinism? The principles of this infernal tribe were surely no part of our ancient political creed.

"Foreign meddlers," as you properly denominate them, have a strange, a mysterious influence in this country. Is there no pride in American bosoms? Can their hearts endure that Callender, Duane, Cooper, and Lyon, should be the most influential men in the country, all foreigners and all degraded characters? It is astonishing to me that the "tribes of law-followers" should adopt principles subversive of all law, should unite with the ignorant and illiberal against men of understanding and property. The plan of our worthy friend, John Rutledge, relative to the admission of strangers to the privileges of citizens, as you explain it, was certainly prudent. Americans will find that their own experience will coincide with the experience of all other nations, and foreigners must be received with caution, or they will destroy all confidence in government.

I have been well informed of the frank, candid, and honorable conduct of General Pinckney at your State election, which was conformable to the whole tenor of his conduct through life, as far as it has come to my knowledge.

The only consolation I shall want will be that of employment. Ennui, when it rains on a man in large drops, is worse than one of our north-east storms; but the labors of agriculture and amusement of letters will shelter me. My greatest grief is that I cannot return to the bar. There I should forget in a moment that I was ever a member of Congress, a foreign minister, or President of the United States. But I cannot speak.

I concur with you so fully in sentiment, that I very much doubt whether in any period of the world so much ever happened in a dozen years to mortify the vanity of human nature, and to render existence odious to man. I know of no philosophy or religion but yours, which can reconcile man to life. I should envy you the felicity of your prospect, if I had not the same in substance in my own view. I am approaching sixty-five, and what are ten or eleven years after that age? I shall arrive soon after you, and it is my sincere, devout wish, that we may be better acquainted, and never separated, in our new country.

To Mr. Jefferson's administration I wish prosperity and felicity; but the commencement of it is too strongly infected with the spirit of party, to give much encouragement to men who are merely national.

Accept, my dear Sir, a repetition of assurances of a warm affection, a sincere friendship, and a high esteem.

TO SAMUEL A. OTIS.

Quincy, 26 January, 1802.

I received your favor of December 16th, and presented the inclosed letter from Mrs. Otis to Mrs. Adams. I congratulate you on your continuance in office.[1] It would not have raised the reputation of any set of men to have made unnecessary changes in such kinds of offices. Even in England, where party and self have at least as much energy as they have here, removals are uncommon in the army, navy, revenue, as well as in the subordinate offices in the great departments. The Marquis

[1] Mr. Otis was Clerk of the Senate of the United States.

of Carmarthen introduced to me Mr. Fraser, an under secretary of State, and afterwards said to me that Mr. Fraser was the cleverest man in England; that in all the changes of administration he had remained in office since the duke of Newcastle's time, above thirty years. I do not mean by this to say that you are the cleverest man in the United States, but I will say you are so clever that it would have been ungenerous, indiscreet, in the present majority to have removed you.

TO THOMAS TRUXTUN.

Quincy, 30 November, 1802.

I have many apologies to make for omitting so long to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favor of the 10th of July. The copy you have done me the honor to present to me of the medal voted by Congress, and executed according to my directions to the Secretary of the Navy, I accept with great pleasure, not only from my personal regard to the giver, but because I esteem every laurel conferred upon you, for the glorious action of the 1st of March, 1800, as an honor done to our beloved country. From both of these motives I have been highly gratified with the honor the gentlemen of Lloyd's Coffee House have done themselves in the handsome acknowledgment they have made of their obligations to you. I regret that the artist had not completed the medal in season, that I might have had the satisfaction of presenting it to an officer who has so greatly deserved it; and I lament still more that I had not the power of promoting merit to its just rank in the navy, that of an admiral.

The counsel which Themistocles gave to Athens, Pompey to Rome, Cromwell to England, De Witt to Holland, and Colbert to France, I have always given and shall continue to give to my countrymen, that as the great questions of commerce and power between nations and empires must be decided by a military marine, and war and peace are determined at sea, all reasonable encouragement should be given to the navy. The trident of Neptune is the sceptre of the world.

TO JOSHUA THOMAS, JAMES THACHER, AND WILLIAM JACKSON.

Quincy, 20 December, 1802.

GENTLEMEN, — Nothing could afford me more pleasure than to visit my friends in Plymouth (where I formerly so much delighted to reside) on the 22d instant, according to your polite and obliging invitation, but various circumstances will oblige me to deny myself that gratification.

I feel a well-grounded conviction, that the best principles of our great and glorious ancestors are inherited by a large portion of the American people. And if the talents, the policy, the address, the power, the bigotry, and tyranny of Archbishop Laud, and the court of Charles the First, were not able to destroy or discredit them in 1630 or 1635, there is little cause of apprehension for them from the feeble efforts of the frivolous libertines, who are combining, conspiring, and intriguing against them in 1802. These principles are a file that has broken the teeth of many a viper. Or, to borrow a figure from one of the reformers, they are an anvil which has broken to pieces or worn out a long succession of hammers of firmer metal and more formidable weight than any that have been or can be wielded by the present effeminate and profligate race of their enemies.

While I concur in your opinion, that our free Constitution and elective government can exist no longer than these principles, and must be destroyed in their fall, and although I have sometimes been staggered in my faith for a moment by the license of calumny, I still entertain a pleasing hope that this nation will long enjoy a continuance of felicity and prosperity under their pure principles and representative governments.

Your benevolent wishes for my happiness I with great sincerity reciprocate to you, to the town of Plymouth, to the Old Colony, and to all who rejoice in the day and event you so wisely celebrate.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.

Quincy, 8 March, 1804.

Last night I received your favor of the 15th of February. At the two last meetings of our academy I made inquiry concerning your manuscript, and found that the committee had referred it to a sub-committee, who were not then present, and had not reported. I will endeavor to get this matter settled at the next meeting in May. Buffon, I presume, from all I have heard or read of him, believed in nothing but matter, which he thought was eternal and self-existent. The universe had been from eternity as it is now, with all its good and evil, intelligence and accident, beauty and deformity, harmony and dissonance, order and confusion, virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, equity and inequity, truth and lies; that planets and suns, systems and systems of systems, are born and die, like animals and vegetables, and that this process will go on to all eternity. Something like this was the creed of the King of Prussia and D'Alembert, Diderot, and De la Lande. All this, I think, is neither more nor less than the creed of Epicurus set to music by Lucretius.

"The movements of nature" mean the movements of matter; but can matter move itself? "The renovating power of matter," — what does this mean? Can matter, if annihilated, recreate itself? Matter, if at rest, can it set itself in motion?

A German ambassador once told me, "he could not bear St. Paul, he was so severe against fornication." On the same principle these philosophers cannot bear a God, because he is just.

You could not apply more unfortunately than to me for any knowledge of natural history. A little law, a little ethics, and a little history constitute all the circle of my knowledge, and I am too old to acquire any thing new.

Sensible as I am of the honor, and grateful to you as I am for the offer, I beg leave to decline the dedication. I wish to pass off as little talked of and thought of as possible.

I can hear nothing of Ingraham's journal. It might, for what I know, have gone to the bottom of the sea with him in the Insurgente.

In the wisdom, power, and goodness of our maker is all the security we have against roasting in volcanoes and writhing with the tortures of gout, stone, cholic, and cancers; sinking under the burdens of dray-horses and hackney coach-horses to all eternity. Nature produces all these evils, and if she does it by chance, she may assign them all to us, whether we behave well or ill, and the poor hag will not know what she does.

Almost forty years ago, that is in 1765, I wrote a few thoughts in Edes and Gill's Gazette. Mr. Hollis of London printed them in a pamphlet, and imputed them to Mr. Gridley. He gave them the title of a Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law. A lamentable bagatelle it is. I have no copy of it, and know not where to get one.

I know nothing of Stuart's success. I sat to him at the request of the Massachusetts legislature, but have never seen any thing of the picture but the first sketch.

There are no more than two volumes of the Memoirs of the Academy. Count Sarsfield solicited me very earnestly in London to let him import some French mirrors under my privilege. I told him I considered my privilege as sacred. He then answered: "*Il ne vaut pas un sou d'être votre ami.*" Do not let Hamilton know this. If you do, he will record it in his next pamphlet as an instance of my vanity. Your letters always give pleasure to your old friend.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.

Quincy, 5 February, 1805.

This day I received your favor of the 15th of last month. You and I are in the same predicament. You are buried and forgotten, as you say, in the western wilderness, and I am buried and forgotten at Mount Wollaston; but I believe you are happier than you were when bustling in Holland, and I am very sure I have been happier for these four years past, than I ever was in any four of forty years before that term began. From the year 1760 to the year 1800 I was swallowed up in cares, anxieties, and exertions for the public. At the close of the 18th

century, I was dismissed, to the joy of both parties, to a retirement in which I was never more to see any thing but my plough between me and the grave. I submitted without murmuring, complaint, or dismay, and have enjoyed life and health with gratitude, calmness, and comfort. I cannot always be free from apprehensions for the public; but as all responsibility is cheerfully taken away from me by both parties, I have no fears of future remorse or reflection on myself for any errors or miscarriages of my own.

Such is the nature of the people, and such the construction of our government, that about once in a dozen years there will be an entire change in the administration. I lived twelve years as President and Vice-President; Jefferson may possibly last sixteen; but New York and Pennsylvania cannot remain longer than that period in their present unnatural attachment to the southern States, nor will the natural inconstancy of the people allow them to persevere longer in their present career. Our government will be a game of leap-frog, of factions leaping over one another's backs about once in twelve years, according to my computation.

I am fearful of nothing more than of what you prognosticate, that the people at next change will "fearfully avenge themselves and their wrongs on some of the objects of their present idolatry." The federalists, however, will be too wise to be vindictive.

Franklin's parable against persecution was borrowed from Bishop Taylor, who quotes it from some of the cabalistical writings, as I understood. It is certain that Franklin was not the inventor of it.

The dart of Abaris might be the northern light, for what I know, but it will be difficult to prove it. Who, pray, is Sarbienus? I never heard of him, and cannot find his name in the *Dictionnaire Historique*, nor Moreri, nor any other writer. You must erase every word of panegyric upon Buffon and Jefferson, for Buffon was an atheist and Jefferson is President of the United States.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 1 May, 1807.

. . . . . .

If credit can be given to Judge Innes's deposition and Sebastian's conviction, it is certain that Spain has tampered in the United States, and if she tampered once before with others, she might a second time with Burr. If I was convinced of his guilt of treason or treasonable intentions, I should infer that he was employed by Spain.

You ask me, if I do not sometimes imprecate evils on the day on which I became a politician. I have endeavored to recollect that day. It is a remote one. A mighty impression was made upon my little head at the time of the expedition against Cape Breton under General Pepperell in 1745, and on the approach of the Duke d'Enville's armament against Boston. But I have only my memory to testify so early. An odd accident has within a month brought to light the inclosed letter, which has lain fifty-one years and a half in darkness and silence, in dust and oblivion.[1] Pray tell me your reflections on the sight of this droll phenomenon. I fancy they will be, first, what would our tories and quakers and proprietors have said of this letter, had it been published in 1774, 5, or 6? But I will not guess at any more of your observations. You shall make them yourself and relate them to me. But I will make my own remarks first, and submit them to you.

1. Paine, in "Common Sense," says, that nobody in America ever thought, till he revealed to them the mighty truth, that America would ever be independent. I remember not the words, but this is the sense as I remember it. This I have always, at all times and in all places, contradicted, and have affirmed that the idea of American independence, sooner or later, and of the necessity of it some time or other, was always familiar to gentlemen of reflection in all parts of America, and I spoke of my own knowledge in this province.

2. I very distinctly remember, that in the war of 1755, a union of the colonies, to defend themselves against the en-

[1] The letter to Nathan Webb, written in 1755, and inserted in the first chapter of the memoir in the first volume of this work.

croachments of the French, was the general wish of the gentlemen with whom I conversed, and it was the opinion of some that we could defend ourselves, and even conquer Canada, better without England than with her, if she would but allow us to unite and exert our strength, courage, and skill, diffident as we were of the last.

3. It was the fear of this union of the colonies, which was indeed commenced in a Congress at Albany, which induced the English to take the war into their own hands.

4. The war was so ill conducted by Shirley, Lord Loudon, Braddock, and all other British commanders, till Wolfe and Amherst came forward, that the utmost anxiety prevailed, and a thousand panics were spread lest the French should overrun us all. All this time I was not alone in wishing that we were unshackled by Britain, and left to defend ourselves.

5. The treatment of the provincial officers and soldiers by the British officers during that war made the blood boil in my veins.

6. Notwithstanding all this, I had no desire of independence as long as Britain would do us justice. I knew it must be an obstinate struggle, and saw no advantage in it as long as Britain should leave our liberties inviolate.

7. Jefferson has acquired such glory by his declaration of independence in 1776, that I think I may boast of my declaration of independence in 1755, twenty-one years older than his.

8. Our governor elect, in his biographical sketch of Samuel Adams, ascribes to him the honor of the first idea and project of independence. In 1755, when my letter to Dr. Webb was written, I had never seen the face of Samuel Adams.

9. The English, the Scotch, the tories, and hyperfederalists will rebellow their execrations against me as a rebel from my infancy, and a plotter of independence more than half a hundred years ago.

10. The present ruling party in the United States will repeat, renew, and redouble their curses and sarcasms against me for having meditated the ruin of this country from a boy, from a mere chicken in the eggshell, by building a navy under pretence of protecting our commerce and seaports, but in reality only as a hobby-horse for myself to ride and to increase my patronage. For there can be no doubt but the boy, though not yet twenty years old, and though pinched and starved in a stingy country

school, fully expected to be King of North America, and to marry his daughter to the Prince of Wales, and his son, John Quincy, to the princess royal of England.

11. There can be no doubt but this letter, puerile and childish as it is, will make a distinguished figure in the memoirs of my life. A grave and important question arises on a point of chronology, whether it should be inserted in the month of October, 1755, the time of its birth, or in the month of April, 1807, the time of its resurrection. As you have advised me to write my own life, you must resolve this question for me, for it is too perplexed for my judgment to determine.

12. You may depend upon its authenticity, for I have copied it from the original, to every word and almost every letter of which I can attest, and so might any one else, who should compare it with this, from the similarity of hand and composition.

13. *Vive la bagatelle!*

Now, Sir, to be serious, I do not curse the day when I engaged in public affairs. I do not say when I became a politician, for that I never was. I cannot repent of any thing I ever did conscientiously and from a sense of duty. I never engaged in public affairs for my own interest, pleasure, envy, jealousy, avarice, or ambition, or even the desire of fame. If any of these had been my motive, my conduct would have been very different. In every considerable transaction of my public life, I have invariably acted according to my best judgment, and I can look up to God for the sincerity of my intentions. How, then, is it possible I can repent? Notwithstanding this, I have an immense load of errors, weaknesses, follies, and sins to mourn over and repent of, and these are the only afflictions of my present life.

But, notwithstanding all, St. Paul and Dr. Barrow have taught me to rejoice evermore, and be content. This phrase, "rejoice evermore," shall never be out of my heart, memory, or mouth again, as long as I live, if I can help it. This is my perfectibility of man.

Your "palace of ice" is a most admirable image. I agree that you and I have been employed in building a palace of ice. However, if we did not believe it to be marble, or silver, or gold, or ivory, or alabaster, or stone, or brick, we both thought it good, sound white oak, which would shelter its inhabitants from the inclemency of the weather, and last a long time. But

the heat of the climate in summer has proved it to have been ice. It is all melted to water.

P. S. I forgot a principal point I had in view when I sat down; that is, to congratulate you that the Queen of Etruria has fallen in love with you. Tell Mrs. Rush that I congratulate her that the Queen of Sheba is not likely to visit Solomon at Philadelphia.

TO WILLIAM HEATH.

Quincy, 11 May, 1807.

I read in the Chronicle, some time ago, two speculations with the signature of *A Military Countryman*, and I read them with great pleasure for two very substantial reasons, one of which is that I cordially approved and coincided with every sentiment and every expression in them. The other was, that I knew at once that General Heath was the writer of them. How did you know that, you will ask. I answer, by the style, by the signature, and by the motto. I need not enlarge on the two former, but of the latter I can give you a piece of history. Not much less than thirty years ago, you wrote me a letter in which you quoted the King of Prussia's maxim, "that the entire prosperity of every State rests on the discipline of its armies." I had read this in the King of Prussia's writings before, and was now so struck with it, and thought it so apposite to the exigencies of the times, that I made Edes and Gill insert it as a motto to their Boston Gazette, where it shone to the end of the war. You never knew till now from whence it came, and perhaps least of all suspected that it came from yourself. The maxim is certainly true in a sense; but what is that sense? The King of Prussia was a soldier, a general, and an absolute monarch, whose existence depended on the discipline of his armies, and therefore might adopt this maxim in a sense too absolute. The Pope and his cardinals would probably say that "the entire prosperity of every State depends upon the discipline of the Catholic church." The archbishops and bishops of England would say, "the entire prosperity of every State depends on subscription to the thirty-nine articles." The Presbyterians in

America might say, the entire prosperity of the State depends on observance of the result of synods, assemblies of the clergy, &c. Christians in general might say, that the entire prosperity of the State depends on the religious observation of the sabbath. Men of the most enlarged minds and extensive views may say that the entire prosperity of a State depends on a strict attention in making matrimony be honored and respected. The abuses of marriage, these men will say, are the original source of all corruptions of morals; and without pure morals there can be no prosperity. The American yeomanry say at this day, the entire prosperity of the State depends on agriculture. The American merchants say that it depends on commerce. The lawyers say that it depends on a government of laws and not of men. Philosophers of the deepest reflection will say that wealth and power are not prosperity, and that pure prosperity depends on pure morals. The King of Prussia's maxim is a remnant of the old system, that that order of men who have for their object the defence of the State, ought to enjoy its principal honors, dignities, and emoluments. But, my friend, let me observe to you that on this principle have been founded systems, which will not succeed in this age, either in America or Europe. Hereditary monarchies, hereditary nobilities, originate from this source. Of all professions in society, the military have the most to fear from luxury and effeminacy. Military men, therefore, have been forbidden commerce and all other means of acquiring wealth. Glory has been the only object permitted them. But no men were found who would fight for mere personal glory; and therefore they have been permitted to glory in their birth, and in transmitting their honors to posterity.

But commerce has produced an entire revolution in the sentiments of mankind. Honor and glory are too meagre a diet to feed officers or soldiers in this age. Money they will have, or you will have neither discipline nor army. Even in England, and much more in France, the reward of nobility will not do to excite exertion without money, in the shape of prizes, plunder, or pillage.

These, however, are but airy amusements of speculation; my principal design was to express to you my thanks for communicating your sentiments to the public, and to assure you that I

think with you. Some fortifications to our seaports I think indispensable; some soldiers, especially artillery men, to garrison the fortresses. Armies were always my aversion, however I may have been belied. Some frigates to defend our sea-coasts from insult, and protect our commerce in the West Indies from pirates. Seventy-fours never had my approbation. My judgment was always in favor of frigates, and of them but a moderate number. A general attention to the militia and its instruction and discipline. In these sentiments, if I understand you, we are agreed; and I think it is time for the antediluvian patriarchs to interchange sentiments with each other. We have passed the river and the Red Sea, and escaped from the house of bondage, but we shall never see the promised land. We are still wandering in the wilderness, however secure we may think ourselves.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 21 May, 1807.

My not preserving a copy of my letter to Doctor Nathan Webb (for he was a physician) is no wonder, for I never kept a copy of any letter till I became a member of Congress, in 1774. The observation of your son Richard is very shrewd, and, unfortunately for me, very just. There are the same marks of haste, and heedless inattention to style, which have characterized all my writings to this day.

I have always laughed at the affectation of representing American independence as a novel idea, as a modern discovery, as a late invention. The idea of it as a possible thing, as a probable event, nay, as a necessary and unavoidable measure, in case Great Britain should assume an unconstitutional authority over us, has been familiar to Americans from the first settlement of the country, and was as well understood by Governor Winthrop in 1675,[1] as by Governor Samuel Adams, when he told you that independence had been the first wish of his heart for seven years. I suppose he dated from 1768, when the board of commissioners arrived and landed in Boston under the protection of nine ships of war and four thousand regular troops.

[1] So in the copy. It may refer to the Connecticut Governor. But it is probably an error in the third figure.

A couplet has been repeated with rapture, as long as I can remember, which was imputed to Dean Berkeley. The first line I have forgot, but the last was,

"And empire rises where the sun descends;[1]

This was public many years before my letter of 1755 to Doctor Webb. In 1760, Colonel Josiah Quincy, the grandfather of Josiah Quincy, now a member of Congress from Boston, read to me a letter he had then just received from a Mr. Turner, I believe one of the first mercantile houses in London, congratulating him on the surrender of Montreal to General Amherst, and the final conquest of Canada, "as a great event to America, not only by insuring her tranquillity and repose, but as facilitating and advancing your (Colonel Quincy's) country's rise to independence and empire." Within the course of the year before the meeting of Congress, in 1774, on a journey to some of our circuit courts in Massachusetts, I stopped one night at a tavern in Shrewsbury, about forty miles from Boston, and as I was cold and wet, I sat down at a good fire in the bar-room to dry my great coat and saddle-bags till a fire could be made in my chamber. There presently came in, one after another, half a dozen, or half a score, substantial yeomen of the neighborhood, who, sitting down to the fire after lighting their pipes, began a lively conversation upon politics. As I believed I was unknown to all of them, I sat in total silence to hear them. One said, "The people of Boston are distracted!" Another answered, "No wonder the people of Boston are distracted. Oppression will make wise men mad." A third said, "What would you say, if a fellow should come to your house and tell you he was come to take a list of your cattle, that parliament might tax you for them at so much a head? and how should you feel, if he was to go and break open your barn, to take down your oxen, cows, horses, and sheep?" "What should I say?" replied the first; "I would knock him in the head." "Well," said a fourth, "if parliament can take away Mr. Hancock's wharf and Mr. Rowe's wharf, they can take away your barn and my house." After much more reasoning in this style, a fifth, who had as yet been silent, broke out, "Well, it is high time for us to rebel; we

[1] The lines of Berkeley are now familiarly known to all American readers, but they do not contain the words quoted. See the next letter.

must rebel some time or other, and we had better rebel now than at any time to come. If we put it off for ten or twenty years, and let them go on as they have begun, they will get a strong party among us, and plague us a great deal more than they can now. As yet, they have but a small party on their side." I was disgusted with his word *rebel*, because I was determined never to rebel, as much as I was to resist rebellion against the fundamental privileges of the Constitution, whenever British generals or governors should begin it. I mention this anecdote to show that the idea of independence was familiar, even among the common people, much earlier than some persons pretend. I have heard some gentlemen of education say, that the first idea of independence was suggested to them by the pamphlet "Common Sense;" and others, that they were first converted by it to that doctrine; but these were men of very little conversation with the world, and men of very narrow views and very little reflection.

Your enemies are only your would-be rivals; they can never hurt you. Envy is a foul fiend that is only to be defied. You read Sully. His memoirs are a pretty specimen. Every honest, virtuous, and able man that ever existed, from Abel down to Doctor Rush, has had this enemy to combat through life. "Envy does merit as its shade pursue." You need not fear the charge of vanity. Vanity is really what the French call it, *amour propre*, self-love, and it is a universal passion. All men have it in an equal degree. Honest men do not always disguise it. Knaves often do, if not always. When you see or hear a man pique himself upon his modesty, you may depend upon it, he is as vain a fellow as lives, and very probably a great villain. I would advise you to communicate freely all the compliments you have had or may have from Europe. Defy the foul fiend. Do not infer from this that I think there is no such thing as modesty or decency. On the contrary, it is the duty of every man to respect the self-love of every other man, and not to disgust him by any ostentatious display of his own. But in your case, surrounded as you are with jealous competitors, always intriguing to depress you, it is your right and your duty to mortify their invidious impertinence by a free communication of all your trophies to your friends without any injunctions of secrecy.

I have not seen the pamphlet, entitled "The dangers of the country," but my mind is deeply impressed with the dangers of our country, and all other countries, of France as well as England. Of all countries, there is none more to be pitied than France. England, in my opinion, is in a still less dangerous situation than her rival.

The ominous dissolution of morality, both in theory and practice, throughout the civilized world, threatens dangers and calamities of a novel species, beyond all calculation, because there is no precedent or example in history which can show us the consequences of it. Perhaps you may say, Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah are examples in point. But we have no relation of their rise, progress, and decline. You may say the old world, when it repented God that he had made man, when it grieved him in his heart that he had made so vile a creature, is a case in point. I know not what to say in answer to this, only that the same authority we have for the fact, assures us that the world shall never be again drowned.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 23 May, 1807.

I received, at an exhibition of music in our polite village of Mount Wollaston, on Thursday, your letter relative to Mr. Loud, and sent it immediately to Dr. Tufts by his lady, that the young gentleman's friends might be informed of his situation. I lament the untimely decline of a youth, although I never saw him, who has been represented to me as one who injured his health by too intense an application to study. I never heard his name but once, when my brother Cranch mentioned him to me before he embarked on his voyage.

And now I have mentioned my brother Cranch, a gentleman of four-score, whose memory is better than mine, I will relate to you a conversation with him last evening. I asked him if he recollected the first line of a couplet whose second line was, "and empire rises where the sun descends." He paused a moment and said, —

> "The eastern nations sink, their glory ends,
> And empire rises where the sun descends."

I asked him, if Dean Berkeley was the author of them. He answered no. The tradition was, as he had heard it for sixty years, that these lines were inscribed, or rather drilled, into a rock on the shore of Monument Bay in our old colony of Plymouth, and were supposed to have been written and engraved there by some of the first emigrants from Leyden, who landed at Plymouth. However this may be, I may add my testimony to Mr. Cranch's, that I have heard these verses for more than sixty years. I conjecture that Berkeley became connected with them, in my head, by some report that the bishop had copied them into some publication. There is nothing, in my little reading, more ancient in my memory than the observation that arts, sciences, and empire had travelled westward; and in conversation it was always added since I was a child, that their next leap would be over the Atlantic into America.

The claim of the 1776 men to the honor of first conceiving the idea of American independence, or of first inventing the project of it, is as ridiculous as that of Dr. Priestley to the discovery of the perfectibility of man. I hereby disclaim all pretensions to it, because it was much more ancient than my nativity.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 3 September, 1808.

I will not stand upon ceremonies with you, and wait for the return of a visit, or an answer to my last letter.

Whatever proportion of loyalty to an established dynasty of kings, or whatever taint of Catholic superstition there may be in the present sensations of the Spanish people, or however their conduct may have been excited by British or Austrian gold, I revere the mixture of pure patriotism that appears to be in it and inseparable from it, and I wish to know the sentiments of your Pennsylvania statesmen concerning it.

The contest between the houses of Austria and Bourbon in the beginning of the last century for the succession to the throne of Spain, is well known. Philip V. and Charles VI. were rivals, as Ferdinand VII. and Joseph I. are now. Charles was sup-

ported by the Emperor, England and Holland, and Philip by France and her allies. The Earls of Galway and Peterborough ran about Spain with armies at their heels, and proclaimed Charles at Madrid, and many other places, till Louis XIV. and his grandson Philip were in despair. In this situation, Vauban, the great teacher of fortification, and one of the profound statesmen as well as honest patriots of France, proposed to his court to send Philip to reign in America, that the commerce of Mexico and Peru might be secured to France. The English seem to have adopted this project of Vauban, and to aim at securing the commerce of South America to themselves. Have your Philadelphia politicians considered what will be the consequence of this to the United States? How will it affect our Louisiana claims, our West India commerce? I am almost afraid to ask so bold and hazardous a question, as whether it will not make France the natural ally of the United States.

The inclination of the Spaniards was in favor of Philip, and the fortitude of the Castilians turned the scale in his favor. They made great efforts when they found him in danger. It is a very arduous enterprise to impose upon a nation a king in spite of their teeth. The Austrians, the Dutch, the English, and the Portuguese, were harassed in Spain, suffered for want of provisions, and were consumed by degrees.

By some accounts, certain provinces in Spain have proclaimed Prince Charles. This looks like a desire to revive the old connection of Spain with the house of Austria, which might check the house of Napoleon for the present, but would lay a foundation for interminable future wars in Europe.

Is there room to hope that the French will meet with effectual obstructions in Spain? How will they procure provisions? Not by sea. The English fleet is in the way. By land, from France and Italy, will be almost impossible, and the Spaniards have not onions and turnips enough for themselves. An army of two or three hundred thousand Frenchmen will consume a great many bushels. The Spaniards had better fight and die in battle than perish with famine.

These occurrences in Spain open wide views to those who have more information and sagacity than I have. They will give trouble to Napoleon, employ a great part of his force, and

be a powerful temptation to nations he has humbled, to avenge their disgrace. The French have always been chased out of Italy. Germany and the north of Europe must be alarmed at having Spain and the Indies in the power of the Corsicans. In short, I know not but the Spaniards may produce a Marlborough in England, and in Germany a Eugene, to give Napoleon a fistula. What think you?

I have always called our Constitution a game at leap-frog. New England is again converted to federalism. The federal administration lasted twelve years. The republicans then leaped over their heads and shoulders, and have ruled eight years. They may possibly hold out four years more, and then probably the federalists will leap again. But neither party will ever be strong, while they adhere to their austere, exclusive maxims. Neither party will ever be able to pursue the true interest, honor, and dignity of the nation. I lament the narrow, selfish spirit of the leaders of both parties, but can do no good to either. They are incorrigible. We must adopt the Dutch motto, "*Incertum quo fata ferant.*"

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 27 September, 1808.

That Rosicrucian sylph, that fairy Queen Mab, or that other familiar spirit, whatever it is, that inspires your nightly dreams, I would not exchange, if I had it, for the demon of Socrates. You have more wit, and humor, and sense in your sleep than other people, I was about to say than you yourself, have when awake. I know not whether I have ever read two finer allegories than the two you have given me from your nocturnal slumbers. I agree well enough with you in the moral of them both.

I believe, with you, "a republican government," while the people have the virtues, talents, and love of country necessary to support it, "the best possible government to promote the interest, dignity, and happiness of man." But you know that commerce, luxury, and avarice have destroyed every republican

government. England and France have tried the experiment, and neither of them could preserve it for twelve years. It might be said with truth that they could not preserve it for a moment, for the commonwealth of England, from 1640 to 1660, was in reality a succession of monarchies under Pym, Hampden, Fairfax, and Cromwell, and the republic of France was a similar monarchy under Mirabeau, Brissot, Danton, Robespierre, and a succession of others like them, down to Napoleon, the Emperor. The mercenary spirit of commerce has recently destroyed the republics of Holland, Switzerland, and Venice. Not one of these republics, however, dared at any time to trust the people with any elections whatever, much less with the election of first magistrates. In all those countries, the monster venality would instantly have appeared, and swallowed at once all security of liberty, property, fame, and life.

When public virtue is gone, when the national spirit is fled, when a party is substituted for the nation and faction for a party, when venality lurks and skulks in secret, and, much more, when it impudently braves the public censure, whether it be sent in the form of emissaries from foreign powers, or is employed by ambitious and intriguing domestic citizens, the republic is lost in essence, though it may still exist in form. The form of a Senate is still preserved in Rome. The Prince Rezzonico was presented to me in London, under the title of "*Senatore di Roma.*" But what sort of a republic is Rome at present?

When commerce, and luxury, and dissipation had introduced avarice among the Greeks, the artful policy and military discipline of Philip and his son prevailed over all the toils, negotiations, and eloquence of Demosthenes. The people who, in virtuous times, or, if you will, in times of national pride, had set the hosts of Persia at defiance, now sold themselves and bowed their necks to the yoke of a petty prince of Macedonia. And poor Demosthenes, abandoned, persecuted while he lived, was pursued to an ignominious death, as the only reward of his patriotism. Immortal glory has followed his eloquence, but this he could not enjoy while he lived, and we know not that he enjoys it since his death. I hope he has enjoyments superior to this.

The same causes produced the same effects in Rome, and the

labors, eloquence, and patriotism of Cicero were to as little purpose as those of Demosthenes, and were equally rewarded.

We mortals cannot work miracles; we struggle in vain against the constitution and course of nature.

Americans, I fondly hope and candidly believe, are not yet arrived at the age of Demosthenes or Cicero. If we can preserve our Union entire, we may preserve our republic; but if the union is broken, we become petty principalities, little better than the feudatories, one of France and the other of England.

If I could lay an embargo, or pass a new importation law against corruption and foreign influence, I would not make it a temporary, but a perpetual law, and I would not repeal it, though it should raise a clamor as loud as my gag-law, or your grog-law, or Mr. Jefferson's embargo. The majorities in the five States of New England, though small, are all on one side. New York has fortified the same party with half a dozen members, and anxious are the expectations from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. There is a body of the same party in every other State. The Union, I fear, is in some danger. Nor is the danger of foreign war much diminished. An alliance between England and Spain is a new aspect of planets towards us. Surrounded by land, on the east, north, west, and south, by the territories of two such powers, and blockaded by sea by two such navies as the English and Spanish, without a friend or ally by sea or land, we may have all our republican virtues put to a trial.

I am weary of conjectures, but not in despair.

TO J. B. VARNUM.

Quincy, 26 December, 1808.

I receive very kindly your obliging letter of the 15th of this month. Ever since my return from Europe, where I had resided ten years, and could not be fully informed of the state of affairs in my own country, I have been constantly anxious and alarmed at the intemperance of party spirit and the unbounded license of our presses. In the same view I could not but lament some

things which have lately passed in public bodies. To instance, at Dedham and Topsfield, and last of all in the resolutions of our Massachusetts legislature. Upon principle, I see no right in our Senate and House to dictate, nor to advise, nor to request our representatives in Congress. The right of the people to instruct their representatives, is very dear to them, and will never be disputed by me. But this is a very different thing from an interference of a State legislature. Congress must be "the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night" to conduct this nation, and if their eyes are to be diverted by wandering light, accidentally springing up in every direction, we shall never get through the wilderness.

I have not been inattentive to the course of our public affairs, and agree with Congress in their resolutions to resist the decrees, edicts, and orders of France and England; but I think the king's proclamation for the impressment of seamen on board our merchant ships has not been distinctly enough reprobated. It is the most groundless pretension of all. Retired as I am, conversing with very few of any party, out of the secret of affairs, collecting information only from public papers and pamphlets, many links in the great chain of deliberations, actions, and events, may have escaped me. You will easily believe, that an excessive diffidence in my own opinions has not been the sin that has most easily beset me. I must nevertheless confess to you that in all the intricate combinations of our affairs, to which I have ever been a witness, I never found myself so much at a loss to form a judgment of what the nation ought to do, or what part I ought to act. No man, then, I hope, will have more confidence in the solidity of any thing I may suggest than I have myself.

I revere the upright and enlightened general sense of our American nation. It is nevertheless capable, like all other nations, of general prejudices and national errors. Among these, I know not whether there is any more remarkable than that opinion so universal, that it is in our power to bring foreign nations to our terms, by withholding our commerce. When the executive and legislative authority of any nation, especially in the old governments and great powers of Europe, have adopted measures upon deliberation, and published them to the world, they cannot recede without a deep humiliation and disgrace, in

the eyes of their own subjects, as well as all Europe. They will therefore obstinately adhere to them, at the expense even of great sacrifices, and in defiance of great dangers. In 1774, Congress appeared almost unanimously sanguine that a non-importation and a non-consumption association would procure an immediate repeal of acts of parliament and royal orders. I went heartily along with the rest in all these measures, because I knew that the sense of the nation, the public opinion in all the colonies, required them, and I did not see that they could do harm. But I had no confidence in their success in any thing but uniting the American people. I expressed this opinion freely to some of my friends, particularly to Mr. Henry of Virginia and to Major Hawley of Massachusetts. These two, and these only, agreed with me in opinion, that we must fight, after all. We found by experience that a war of eight years, in addition to all our resolutions, was necessary, and the aid of France, Spain, and Holland, too, before our purposes could be accomplished. Do we presume that we can excite insurrection, rebellion, and a revolution in England? Even a revolution would be of no benefit to us. A republican government in England would be more hostile to us than the monarchy is. The resources of that country are so great, their merchants, capitalists, and principal manufacturers are so rich, that they can employ their manufacturers and store their productions for a long time, perhaps longer than we can or will bear to hoard ours. In 1794, upon these principles and for these reasons, I thought it my duty to decide, in Senate, against Mr. Madison's resolutions, as they were called, and I have seen no reason to alter my opinion since. I own I was sorry when the late non-importation law passed. When a war with England was seriously apprehended in 1794, I approved of an embargo, as a temporary measure to preserve our seamen and property, but not with any expectation that it would influence England. I thought the embargo, which was laid a year ago, a wise and prudent measure for the same reason, namely to preserve our seamen and as much of our property as we could get in, but not with the faintest hope that it would influence the British Councils. At the same time I confidently expected that it would be raised in a few months. I have not censured any of these measures, because I knew the fond attachment of the

nation to them; but I think the nation must soon be convinced that they will not answer their expectations. The embargo and the non-intercourse laws, I think, ought not to last long. They will lay such a foundation of disaffection to the national government as will give great uneasiness to Mr. Jefferson's successor, and produce such distractions and confusions as I shudder to think of. The naval and military force to carry them into execution would maintain a war.

Are you then for war, you will ask. I will answer you candidly. I think a war would be a less evil than a rigorous enforcement of the embargo and non-intercourse. But we have no necessity to declare war against England or France, or both. We may raise the embargo, repeal the non-intercourse, authorize our merchants to arm their vessels, give them special letters of marque to defend themselves against all unlawful aggressors, and take and burn or destroy all vessels, or make prize of them as enemies, that shall attack them. In the mean time apply all our resources to build frigates, some in every principal seaport. These frigates ought not to be assembled in any one port to become an object of a hostile expedition to destroy them. They should be separated and scattered as much as possible from New Orleans to Passamaquoddy. I never was fond of the plan of building line of battle ships. Our policy is not to fight squadrons at sea, but to have fast-sailing frigates to scour the seas and make impression on the enemy's commerce; and in this way we can do great things. Our great seaports and most exposed frontier places ought not to be neglected in their fortifications; but I cannot see for what purpose a hundred thousand militia are called out, nor why we should have so large an army at present. The revenues applied to these uses would be better appropriated to building frigates. We may depend upon it, we shall never be respected by foreign powers until they see that we are sensible of the great resources which the Almighty in his benevolent providence has put into our hands. No nation under the sun has better materials, architects, or mariners for a respectable maritime power. I have no doubt but our people, when they see a necessity, will cheerfully pay the taxes necessary for their defence, and to support their union, independence, and national honor. When our merchants are armed, if they are taken, they cannot blame the government;

if they fight well, and captivate their enemies, they will acquire glory and encouragement at home, and England or France may determine for themselves whether they will declare war. I believe neither will do it, because each will be afraid of our joining the other. If either should, in my opinion, the other will rescind; but if we should have both to fight, it would not be long before one or the other would be willing to make peace, and I see not much difference between fighting both and fighting England alone. My heart is with the Spanish patriots, and I should be glad to assist them as far as our commerce can supply them.

I conclude with acknowledging that we have received greater injuries from England than from France, abominable as both have been. I conclude that whatever the government determines, I shall support as far as my small voice extends.

N. B. The tribute and the British licenses must be prohibited with adequate penalties.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.

Quincy, 16 February, 1809.

I have yours of the 18th of January. When you receive your diploma, you will have no fees to pay. We have not yet adopted any regulation which requires fees from the members elected. Perhaps it would be prudent in future to adopt such a measure, and give a salary to our secretary. Our officers are now men of so much business, and so dependent on it for the support of their families, that they cannot attend enough to the business of the Academy. I would send you our transactions, if I knew how. I spoke to Dr. Morse and Dr. Kirkland, but they have not informed me of a conveyance.

The Dutch history, as you say, should be instructive to us. The alliance with England has in the end been fatal to Holland. The close connection between the house of Hanover and the house of Orange, the Dutch policy to depend upon the protection of the English fleet, has given preponderance to the four agricultural provinces over the three maritime provinces, and

induced the States General to neglect and abandon the marine for the purpose of maintaining a standing army for the Prince of Orange to review daily on the parade at the Hague. In consequence, their independence has been lost. Beware! Oh, my country, beware! lest you suffer English or French intrigues to render a naval power unpopular in America.

Robert Morris (since you ask me my opinion of him) was a frank, generous, and manly mortal. He rose from nothing but a naked boy, by his industry, ingenuity, and fidelity, to great business and credit as a merchant. At the beginning of our revolution, his commerce was stagnated, and as he had overtraded, he was much embarrassed. He took advantage of the times, united with the whigs, came into Congress, and united his credit, supported by my loans in Holland, and resources of the United States. By this means he supported his credit for many years; but at last grew extravagant, as all conquerors and extraordinary characters do, and died as he had lived, as I believe, all his days, worth very little solid capital. Like Lafontaine in his epitaph, he might say,

> "Jean s'en alla comme il était venu,
> Mangea le fonds avec le revenu."

If you write dialogues of the dead, you must not put into the mouth of Dumas your correct notions of government. He, poor man, was too dependent on the French, and too devoted to democracy, to advocate the true system of government. I say with you and Voltaire, —

> "Vivons, écrivons, aimons, buvons, cher Horace!"

We may be reduced to hard necessities. The two most powerful, active, and enterprising nations that ever existed are now contending with us. The two nations, to whom mankind are under more obligations for the progress of science and civilization than to any others, except the Hebrews. This consideration affects me more than the danger from either or both. I excepted the Hebrews, for in spite of Bolingbroke and Voltaire, I will insist that the Hebrews have done more to civilize men than any other nation. If I were an atheist, and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the

nations. If I were an atheist of the other sect, who believe or pretend to believe that all is ordered by chance, I should believe that chance had ordered the Jews to preserve and propagate to all mankind the doctrine of a supreme, intelligent, wise, almighty sovereign of the universe, which I believe to be the great essential principle of all morality, and consequently of all civilization. I cannot say that I love the Jews very much neither, nor the French, nor the English, nor the Romans, nor the Greeks. We must love all nations as well as we can, but it is very hard to love most of them.

Our medium is depreciated by the multitude of swindling banks, which have emitted bank bills to an immense amount beyond the deposits of gold and silver in their vaults, by which means the price of labor and land and merchandise and produce is doubled, tripled, and quadrupled in many instances. Every dollar of a bank bill that is issued beyond the quantity of gold and silver in the vaults, represents nothing, and is therefore a cheat upon somebody.

Solomon built Palmyra, the ruins of which show that his magnificence was not a fable.

TO SKELTON JONES.

Quincy, 11 March, 1809.

I received yesterday your favor of the month of August, 1808, and if the following answers to your questions will be any gratification to your curiosity, or any aid to your work, they are at your service.

1. My father was John Adams, the son of Joseph Adams, the son of another Joseph Adams, the son of Henry Adams, who all lived independent New England farmers, and died and lie buried in this town of Quincy, formerly called Braintree, and more anciently still, Mount Wollaston. My mother was Susanna Boylston, daughter of Peter Boylston, of Brookline, the oldest son of Thomas Boylston, a physician who came from England in 1656, and purchased a farm in that town near Boston.

2. I was born in Quincy, on the 19th of October, 1735.

3. My early life and education were, first at the public latin school in the then town of Braintree; then at a private academy under Mr. Joseph Marsh, within three doors of my father's house; then at Harvard College, in Cambridge, where, after four years' studies, I received a degree as bachelor of arts in 1755, and, after three years more, that of master of arts.

4. Among these accidents,[1] the principal that I recollect were certain theological controversies, which were conducted, as I thought, with an uncharitable spirit of intolerance that convinced me I should be forever unfit for the profession of divinity, and determined me to the profession of the law. To this cause were added many compliments from my academical companions, who endeavored to make me believe that I had a voice and a tongue, as well as a face and front, for a public speaker, and that I was better fitted for the bar than the pulpit. For the faculty of medicine I never had any inclination, having an aversion to sick rooms and no fondness for rising at all hours of the night to visit patients.

5. Mr. Maccarty, a clergyman of Worcester, authorized by the selectmen, at the commencement at college, in 1755, happening to be pleased with the performance of my part in the public exhibition, engaged me to take the charge of the latin school in that town, where in a few months I entered as a clerk in the office of Colonel James Putnam, a counsellor at law in very large practice and of very respectable talents and information. Here, as I boarded in his family, I had opportunities of conversing with all the judges, lawyers, and many others of the principal characters of the province, and heard their speculations upon public affairs. This was highly delightful to me, because my father, who had a public soul, had drawn my attention to public affairs. From my earliest infancy I had listened with eagerness to his conversation with his friends during the whole expedition to Cape Breton, in 1745, and I had received very grievous impressions of the injustice and ingratitude of Great Britain towards New England in that whole transaction, as well as many others before and after it, during the years 1754,

[1] Mr. Jones's inquiry was, respecting "those accidents which decided your destiny, and gave a color and complexion to all your future prospects and conduct."

1755, 1756, and 1757. The conduct of Generals Shirley, Braddock, Abercrombie, Webb, and above all Lord Loudon, which were daily discussed in Mr. Putnam's family, gave me such an opinion and such a disgust of the British government, that I heartily wished the two countries were separated for ever. I was convinced we could defend ourselves against the French, and manage our affairs better without, than with, the English. In 1758 and 1759, Mr. Pitt coming into power, sent Wolfe, and Amherst, whom I saw with his army, as they passed through Worcester, and these conquered Cape Breton and Quebec. I then rejoiced that I was an Englishman, and gloried in the name of Briton. But, alas! how short was my triumph in British wisdom and justice! In February, 1761, I heard the argument in the council chamber in Boston upon writs of assistance, and there saw that Britain was determined to let nothing divert me from my fidelity to my country.

6.[1] An inflexible course of studies and labors, to promote, preserve, and secure that independence of my country, which I so early saw to be inevitable, against all parties, factions, and nations that have shown themselves unfriendly to it.

7. The 4th of March, 1801. The causes of my retirement are to be found in the writings of Freneau, Markoe, Ned Church, Andrew Brown, Paine, Callender, Hamilton, Cobbet, and John Ward Fenno and many others, but more especially in the circular letters of members of Congress from the southern and middle States. Without a complete collection of all these libels, no faithful history of the last twenty years can ever be written, nor any adequate account given of the causes of my retirement from public life.

8. My life for the last eight years has been spent in the bosom of my family, surrounded by my children and grandchildren; on my farm, in my garden and library. But in all this there is nothing interesting to the public.

9. Five feet, seven or nine inches, I really know not which.

10. I have one head, four limbs, and five senses, like any other man, and nothing peculiar in any of them.

11. I have been married forty-four years.

12. To Miss Abigail Smith, on the 25th of October, 1764, in

[1] Mr. Jones's sixth question was as to "the part you acted during the time in which you were in a public station."

her father's house at Weymouth, the next town to this, and by her father, who was a clergyman.

13. Three sons and a daughter.

14. This would require twenty volumes.[1]

15. My temper in general has been tranquil, except when any instance of extraordinary madness, deceit, hypocrisy, ingratitude, treachery or perfidy, has suddenly struck me. Then I have always been irascible enough, and in three or four instances, very extraordinary ones, too much so. The storm, however, never lasted for half an hour, and anger never rested in the bosom.

16. Very little, I believe.[2]

17. Under my first latin master, who was a churl, I spent my time in shooting, skating, swimming, flying kites, and every other boyish exercise and diversion I could invent. Never mischievous. Under my second master, who was kind, I began to love my books and neglect my sports.

18. From that time I have been too studious. At college, next to the ordinary routine of classical studies, mathematics and natural philosophy were my favorite pursuits. When I began to study law, I found ethics, the law of nations, the civil law, the common law, a field too vast to admit of many other inquiries. Classics, history, and philosophy have, however, never been wholly neglected to this day.

19. Such persons are all dead, or so old as to be incapable of writing any long details.

20. I have no miniature, and have been too much abused by painters ever to sit to any one again

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TO DANIEL WRIGHT AND ERASTUS LYMAN.

Quincy, 13 March, 1809.

I have received your very civil letter of the 3d of this month with emotions very similar to those which I felt many years ago upon the following occasion.

[1] 14. "Anecdotes relative to yourself or any of your acquaintances who have borne public offices."

[2] 16. "Has it (your temper) undergone any change?" *Mr. Jones's queries.*

Returning from Holland to Paris in 1784, I was invited to dine, with my wife and daughter, by the Baron de Stael, ambassador from Sweden. As I was the first of the *corps diplomatique* who arrived, the ambassador was showing me a fine portrait of the King of Sweden, his master, when the Count Deodati, ambassador from the Elector of Saxony, came in. After compliments to De Stael, Deodati turned to me, whom he had known several years before, and the following dialogue ensued.

Deodati. Very well, Mr. Adams, you are a republican, I suppose.

Adams. You are in the right, Mr. Ambassador, I have the honor to be a republican.

Deodati. And your countrymen are republican, and your government is republican.

Adams. Certainly. My countrymen are republicans, and our government is republican.

Deodati. And you have made your countrymen and your government republican.

Adams. Not at all, Sir. My country and its government have been republican from their origin, and long before I was born.

Deodati. Very well. You at least have made your country very celebrated. You have made it independent. You have made an astonishing treaty with Holland. You have made a marvellous peace with England. You have made her acknowledge your independence.

Adams. I beg your pardon, Sir. You are too polite. You do me too much honor. I have no pretensions to have performed all these great achievements. I have acted a part in some of these affairs.

Deodati. But! Very well! I will now tell you the recompense you will receive for all that you have done.

Adams. I shall be very glad to hear your prognostications concerning my destiny.

Deodati. Your fortune will be that of all the republicans; of Aristides, of Phocion, of Miltiades, of Scipio, &c., &c.

Adams. I believe it.

Deodati. You believe it?

Adams. Yes.

Deodati. You will experience all the ingratitude, all the injustice of the ancient republicans.

Adams. I expect it, and always have expected it.

Deodati. You will be ill-treated, hated, despised, and persecuted.

Adams. I have no doubt of all that. It is in the ordinary nature and course of things.

Diodati. Your virtue must be very heroical, or your philosophy very stoical, to undertake all those adventures, with your eyes open, for such a reward.

So much for Deodati and his warning voice; and so much for my well-grounded anticipations. This is no fabulous dialogue of the dead, but strict historical truth. A curious coalition of French and English emissaries with federal and republican libellers, have so completely fulfilled the prophecy of Deodati and my own forebodings, so totally destroyed my reputation by their calumnies, that I have neither power nor influence to do any thing for my country, to assist her in her present distresses, or guard her against future calamities. Nothing remains to me but the right of private judgment, and that I exercise freely, and communicate my sentiments as freely to those who wish to know them.

I am *totis viribus* against any division of the Union, by the North River, or by Delaware River, or by the Potomac, or any other river, or by any chain of mountains. I am for maintaining the independence of the nation at all events. I am no advocate of Mr. Gore's declaration of war against France. Knowing, as I do, from personal experience, the mutually friendly dispositions between the people of France and the people of America, Bonaparte out of the question, I shall be very sorry to see them converted into ill will, and old English prejudices revived. Lasting injuries and misfortunes would arise to this country from such a change. I am averse, also, to a war with England, and wish to maintain our neutrality as long as possible without conceding important principles. If either of the belligerent powers forces us all into a war, I am for fighting that power, whichever it may be.

I always consider the whole nation as my children; but they have almost all been undutiful to me. You two gentlemen are almost the only ones, out of my own house, who have for a long time, and I thank you for it, expressed a filial affection for

JOHN ADAMS.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 12 April, 1809.

Thank you for your favor of the 1st. I might have quoted Job as well as St. Paul as a precedent, but as I mix religion with politics as little as possible, I chose to confine myself to Cicero. You advise me to write my own life. I have made several attempts, but it is so dull an employment that I cannot endure it. I look so much like a small boy in my own eyes, that, with all my vanity, I cannot endure the sight of the picture. I am glad you have resolved to do yourself justice. I am determined to vindicate myself in some points while I live. Inclosed is a whimsical specimen.[1] In future I shall not be so *goguenard.*

The dialogue between Deodati and me is literal truth; that is, it is a literal translation from the French, in which language the conversation was held, and which I reduced to writing. You may ask what reason I had for foreseeing such consequences. I will give you a few hints among a thousand.

1. When I went home to my family in May, 1770, from the town meeting in Boston, which was the first I had ever attended, and where I had been chosen in my absence, without any solicitation, one of their representatives, I said to my wife, "I have accepted a seat in the House of Representatives, and thereby have consented to my own ruin, to your ruin, and the ruin of our children. I give you this warning, that you may prepare your mind for your fate." She burst into tears, but instantly cried out in a transport of magnanimity, "Well, I am willing in this cause to run all risks with you, and be ruined with you, if you are ruined." These were times, my friend, in Boston, which tried women's souls as well as men's.

2. I saw the awful prospect before me and my country in all its horrors, and, notwithstanding all my vanity, was conscious of a thousand defects in my own character as well as health, which made me despair of going through and weathering the storms in which I must be tossed.

3. In the same year, 1770, my sense of equity and humanity

[1] A copy of the letter immediately preceding this.

impelled me, against a torrent of unpopularity, and the inclination of all my friends, to engage in defence of Captain Preston and the soldiers. My successful exertions in that cause, though the result was perfectly conformable to law and justice, brought upon me a load of indignation and unpopularity, which I knew would never be forgotten, nor entirely forgiven. The Boston newspapers to this day show that my apprehensions were well founded.

4. You can testify for me that in 1774 my conduct in Congress drew upon me the jealousy and aversion, not only of the tories in Congress, who were neither few nor feeble, but of the whole body of quakers and proprietary gentlemen in Pennsylvania. I have seen and felt the consequences of these prejudices to this day.

5. I call you to witness that I was the first member of Congress who ventured to come out in public, as I did in January, 1776, in my "Thoughts on Government, in a letter from a gentleman to his friend," that is, Mr. Wythe, in favor of a government, in three branches, with an independent judiciary. This pamphlet, you know, was very unpopular. No man appeared in public to support it, but yourself. You attempted in the public papers to give it some countenance, but without much success. Franklin leaned against it. Dr. Young, Mr. Timothy Matlack, and Mr. James Cannon, and I suppose Mr. George Bryan were alarmed and displeased at it. Mr. Thomas Paine was so highly offended with it, that he came to visit me at my chamber at Mrs. Yard's to remonstrate and even scold at me for it, which he did in very ungenteel terms. In return, I only laughed heartily at him, and rallied him upon his grave arguments from the Old Testament to prove that monarchy was unlawful in the sight of God. "Do you seriously believe, Paine," said I, "in that pious doctrine of yours?" This put him in good humor, and he laughed out. "The Old Testament!" said he, "I do not believe in the Old Testament. I have had thoughts of publishing my sentiments of it, but, upon deliberation, I have concluded to put that off till the latter part of life." Paine's wrath was excited because my plan of government was essentially different from the silly projects that he had published in his "Common Sense." By this means I became suspected and unpopular with the

leading demagogues and the whole constitutional party in Pennsylvania.

6. Upon my return from France in 1779, I found myself elected by my native town of Braintree a member of the Convention for forming a Constitution for the State of Massachusetts. I attended that convention of near four hundred members. Here I found such a chaos of absurd sentiments concerning government, that I was obliged daily, before that great assembly, and afterwards in the Grand Committee, to propose plans, and advocate doctrines, which were extremely unpopular with the greater number. Lieutenant-Governor Cushing was avowedly for a single assembly, like Pennsylvania. Samuel Adams was of the same mind. Mr. Hancock kept aloof, in order to be governor. In short, I had at first no support but from the Essex junto, who had adopted my ideas in the letter to Mr. Wythe. They supported me timorously, and at last would not go with me to so high a mark as I aimed at, which was a complete negative in the governor upon all laws. They made me, however, draw up the Constitution, and it was finally adopted, with some amendments very much for the worse. The bold, decided, and determined part I took in this assembly in favor of a good government, acquired me the reputation of a man of high principles and strong notions in government, scarcely compatible with republicanism. A foundation was here laid of much jealousy and unpopularity among the democratical people in this State.

7. In Holland, I had driven the English party and the stockholders' party before me, like clouds before the wind, and had brought that power to unite cordially with America, France, and Spain against England. If I had not before alienated the whole English nation from me, this would have been enough to produce an eternal jealousy of me; and I fully believed that whenever a free intercourse should take place between Britain and America, I might depend upon their perpetual ill will to me, and that their influence would be used to destroy mine.

8. In all my negotiations in France and Holland in 1778, 1779, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783, and 1784, I had so uniformly resisted all the arts and intrigues of the Count de Vergennes and M. de Sartine and all their satellites, and that with such perfect success, that I well knew, although they treated me

with great external respect, yet in their hearts they had conceived an ineradicable jealousy and aversion to me. I well knew, therefore, that French influence in America would do all in its power to trip me up.

9. Dr. Franklin's behavior had been so excessively complaisant to the French ministry, and in my opinion had so endangered the essential interests of our country, that I had been frequently obliged to differ from him, and sometimes to withstand him to his face; so that I knew he had conceived an irreconcilable hatred of me, and that he had propagated and would continue to propagate prejudices, if nothing worse, against me in America from one end of it to the other. Look into Benjamin Franklin Bache's Aurora and Duane's Aurora for twenty years, and see whether my expectations have not been verified.

With all these reflections fresh in my mind, you may judge whether my anticipations in the good-humored conversation with Deodati were rash, peevish, or ill grounded.

In short, I have every reason to acknowledge the protecting providence of God, from my birth, and especially through my public life. I have gone through life with much more safety and felicity than I ever expected. With devout gratitude I acknowledge the divine favor in many instances, and among others for giving me a friend in you, who, though you would never follow me as a disciple, have always been my friend.

TO JOSEPH LYMAN.

Quincy, 20 April, 1809.

I have received your respectful letter of the 21st of March. It is not now necessary for me to say any thing concerning many of the topics. To explain myself fully, and enter into the histories of past occurrences alluded to, would require a volume.

I have forsaken the persons and interest of none of my friends. The leaders to whom the federal party has now blindly abandoned itself, were never my friends.

I have departed from no principle. My invariable principle for five-and-thirty years has been, to promote, preserve, and

secure the integrity of the Union, and the independence of the nation, against the policy of England as well as France.

When France attempted to degrade us, I exerted all my industry to arouse, inspire, and animate my fellow-citizens to resistance, and with so much success, that the then French government were compelled to retract. If for this service I had no thanks from the republicans, I had nothing but insolence and scurrility from the federalists. Look back and read the federal newspapers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia of that period, you will then see how I was treated. If your namesake, of Springfield, who was then a representative in Congress, one of the most amiable of men, were now alive, he could inform you, as he did me, with the kindest expressions of attachment to me, and indignation against the treachery of my pretended federal friends. He assured me that the federalists in New York, with Hamilton at their head, had in secret caucus agreed to sacrifice Adams. I had other information from other quarters, that at the meeting of the Cincinnati at New York, when they chose Hamilton their President-General, it was agreed, and the reverend doctors of divinity (and there were several of these present) concurred in the pious project and the pious language, to sacrifice Adams, and bring in Pinckney. The intrigues they practised to accomplish this were very extensive and very jesuitical; but to develop them would lead me too far. I will only add that the Boston and the Pennsylvania, if not the South Carolina federal leaders were in the same plot. They were assisted, too, by the publications in England, particularly the Anti-Jacobin, then under the direction of Mr. Canning. I know that French influence drove me into banishment; but it would not have had the power, if it had not been essentially assisted by the pharisaical, jesuitical, machiavelian intrigue and influence of the leading federalists.

I assure you, Sir, "a war with England will not meet my hearty reprobation," if England makes it necessary. England and France have both given us just cause for war, but neither has yet made it necessary. The first of the two that shall render war necessary, shall have my vote for it.

I am surprised that you should think there is no pretext or excuse for a war with England, that you should talk of their bearing so much with the waywardness of our government,

and that she has done nothing to injure us but from a principle of necessary self-defence, and a retaliation of injuries from their adversaries, which we had not the dignity to resent and repel. As you say, Mr. Adams would not have done thus. I assure you, Mr. Adams would have resisted and repelled, to the utmost of his power, the British proclamation of blockade of eleven hundred miles of sea-coast, from the Elbe to Brest, which was the first of the diabolical warfare of blockade, decrees, and orders of council. The Berlin decree is expressly grounded on a principle of retaliation. The wickedness of this first blockade cannot be set in a true light without detailing the history of Antwerp, the Scheld, Ostend, Nieuport, &c., the objects of all the Flanders wars for centuries.

In plain English, Great Britain is the first sinner, and the original guilt of our present calamities lies at her door, though France, in point of actual transgression, is not much behind her. The federal papers for the last year or two, assisted by English hirelings, have been employed in varnishing over the conduct of Great Britain, and in calumniating every impartial and disinterested man, till they appear to have obtained a temporary majority in New England. I greatly respect the public opinion of New England, when it is truly informed. In the present instance, with infinite grief I fear it is not. The press has not been free.

I am not able to see how the federalists are to get along with their new friends, the old English. If they succeed, I shall wish them joy, but I cannot expect to live to enjoy that felicity.

TO SAMUEL PERLEY.

Quincy, 19 June, 1809.

I received your favor of the 12th. You propose to me an abridgment of my works. Some fifty-five years ago, I learned from Lord Coke, that abridgments were chiefly useful to the makers of them. It would be of no use to me to abridge my poor productions; besides, I had rather write as many new ones than undertake to abridge the old ones.

You say that our ungovernable newspapers have published

something concerning my works, to my disadvantage. I thank you for this epithet "ungovernable." It is so fine an expression, and at the same time so simple, natural, and exact, that I wonder it has never occurred before. A great minister of State, in the estimation of the world, the Comte de Vergennes, once said to me, "Mr. Adams, the newspapers govern the world!" Let me ask you, Mr. Perley, whether this apothegm has not been verified in our own country, sometimes to her profit, and sometimes to her loss. Let me ask you again, if the world is governed by ungovernable newspapers, whether it does not follow by necessary logical consequence that the world is ungovernable.

The newspapers have represented my writings as monarchical, as having a monarchical tendency; as aristocratical, and having an aristocratical tendency. In answer to these charges, I only ask that they may be read.

I have represented the British Constitution as the most perfect model that has as yet been discovered or invented by human genius and experience, for the government of the great nations of Europe. It is a masterpiece. It is the only system that has preserved or can preserve the shadow, the color, the semblance of liberty to the people in any of the great nations of Europe. Consider the republics, Venice, Holland, Switzerland; not a particle of liberty to the people was preserved in any of them more than there was in France, nor so much either. Our own Constitutions I have represented as the best for us in our peculiar situation, and while we preserve ourselves independent and unallied to any of the great powers of Europe. An alliance with either France or England would, in my humble opinion, put an end to our fine system of liberty.

Let me give you a few hints of the history of my "Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States."

In 1775 and 1776 there had been great disputes, in Congress and in the several States, concerning a proper constitution for the several States to adopt for their government. A Convention in Pennsylvania had adopted a government in one representative assembly, and Dr. Franklin was the President of that Convention. The Doctor, when he went to France in 1776, carried with him the printed copy of that Constitution, and it was immediately propagated through France that this was the plan

of government of Mr. Franklin. In truth, it was not Franklin, but Timothy Matlack, James Cannon, Thomas Young, and Thomas Paine, who were the authors of it. Mr. Turgot, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, Mr. Condorcet, and many others, became enamored with the Constitution of Mr. Franklin. And in my opinion, the two last owed their final and fatal catastrophe to this blind love.

In 1780, when I arrived in France, I carried a printed copy of the report of the Grand Committee of the Massachusetts Convention, which I had drawn up; and this became an object of speculation. Mr. Turgot, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, and Mr. Condorcet and others, admired Mr. Franklin's Constitution and reprobated mine. Mr. Turgot, in a letter to Dr. Price, printed in London, censured the American Constitution as adopting three branches, in imitation of the Constitution of Great Britain. The intention was to celebrate Franklin's Constitution and condemn mine. I understood it, and undertook to defend my Constitution, and it cost me three volumes.

In justice to myself, however, I ought to say, that it was not the miserable vanity of justifying my own work, or eclipsing the glory of Mr. Franklin's, that induced me to write. I never thought of writing till the Assembly of Notables in France had commenced a revolution, with the Duke de la Rochefoucauld and Mr. Condorcet at their head, who I knew would establish a government in one assembly, and that I knew would involve France and all Europe in all the horrors we have seen; carnage and desolation, for fifty, perhaps for a hundred years.

At the same time, every western wind brought us news of town and county meetings in Massachusetts, adopting Mr. Turgot's ideas, condemning my Constitution, reprobating the office of governor and the assembly of the Senate as expensive, useless, and pernicious, and not only proposing to toss them off, but rising in rebellion against them.

In this situation I was determined to wash my hands of the blood that was about to be shed in France, Europe, and America, and show to the world that neither my sentiments nor actions should have any share in countenancing or encouraging any such pernicious, destructive, and fatal schemes. In this view I wrote my defence of the American Constitutions. I had

only the Massachusetts Constitution in view, and such others as agreed with it in the distribution of the legislative power into three branches, in separating the executive from the legislative power, and the judiciary power from both. These three volumes had no relation to the Constitution of the United States. That was not in existence, and I scarcely knew that such a thing was in contemplation till I received it at the moment my third volume was about to issue from the press. I had hardly time to annex it at the end.

I was personally acquainted with Mr. Turgot, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, and Mr. Condorcet. They were as amiable, as learned, and as honest men as any in France. But such was their inexperience in all that relates to free government, so superficial their reading in the science of government, and so obstinate their confidence in their own great characters for science and literature, that I should trust the most ignorant of our honest town meeting orators to makè a Constitution sooner than any or all of them.

And now, Sir, give my compliments to Mr. Simon Greenleaf, your lawyer, and tell him that he is welcome to publish this letter, if he pleases, provided he publishes yours before it, not otherwise.

TO F. A. VANDERKEMP.

Quincy, 15 December, 1809.

I have received your kind letter of the 28th of November, and another, some time ago, that I have not answered.

I rejoice with you in your prosperity, particularly in the happy marriage of your son, and sympathize in all your sorrows, more especially in the misfortune of your friend Vreede, whom I remember well.

Happy are you in your various learning, and the enjoyment of your books; I can read but little, on account of my eyes. My wife and children and grandchildren are very good to read to me, but they cannot always read when I want, nor always such books as I should choose.

There is in one of the last Anthologies a handsome character of our friend Mr. John Luzac, which I hope you will read with pleasure. I should be glad to know who wrote it.

It is a little remarkable that you never heard the literary character of my consort. There have been few ladies in the world of a more correct or elegant taste. A collection of her letters, for the forty-five years that we have been married, would be worth ten times more than Madame de Sévigné's, though not so perfectly measured in syllables and letters, and would, or at least ought to put to the blush Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and all her admirers. So much you will say, for conjugal complaisance. So much, I say, for simple justice to her merit.

What shall I say to you concerning your diploma? I have spoken twenty times to our secretaries to prepare and send it, and have as often been promised. But we are all men of business; our secretaries have been members of Congress, and I begin to think that politicians never should be academicians.

When I was in Leyden, a gentleman was introduced to me, I know not by whom, who presented me with a small volume of Latin poetry of his own composition. In it was the famous compliment to Dr. Franklin, —

Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis,

and I always understood that gentleman to be the author of it. Can you tell me his name? It has been, in France and the world, attributed to Mr. Turgot; but I have always understood that Mr. Turgot took it from that volume, and only altered it to "*Eripuit cœlo fulmen; mox sceptrum tyrannis.*" Pray, tell me, if you can, the name and character of that Leyden Latin poet, and whether my memory has not deceived me.

I am in the last year of my fifteenth lustre, and write with great difficulty. But as long as I can write at all, I shall express to Mr. Vanderkemp my best wishes for his happiness.

Your question, "Through what means the military and commercial spirit can be most effectually entertained, and rendered permanently advantageous to a free nation, under a republican form of government," is of great importance. But no man would discuss it. Nine tenths of our nation would say the militia, the other tenth a standing army. The merchants would all say, "let commerce alone — merchants do as they please;" others would say, "protect trade with a navy;" others, "let commerce be annihilated." Such questions would only make of our academies so many political caucuses.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 21 January, 1810.

Learned, ingenious, benevolent, beneficent old friend of 1774! Thanks for "the light and truth," as I used to call the Aurora, which you sent me. You may descend in a calm, but I have lived in a storm, and shall certainly die in one.[1]

I never asked my son any questions about the motives, designs, or objects of his mission to St. Petersburgh.[2] If I had been weak enough to ask, he would have been wise enough to be silent; for although a more dutiful and affectionate son is not in existence, he knows his obligations to his country and his trust are superior to all parental requests or injunctions. I know therefore no more of his errand than any other man. If he is appointed to be a Samson to tie the foxes' tails together with a torch or firebrand between them, I know nothing of it. One thing I know, we ought to have had an ambassador there these thirty years; and we should have had it, if Congress had not been too complaisant to Vergennes. Mr. Dana was upon the point of being received, and had a solemn promise of a reception, when he was recalled. Under all the circumstances of those times, however, I cannot very severely blame Congress for this conduct, though I think it was an error. It is of great importance to us at present to know more than we do of the views, interests, and sentiments of all the northern powers. If we do not acquire more knowledge than we have, of the present and probable future state of Europe, we shall be hoodwinked and bubbled by the French and English.

Of Mr. Jackson, his talents, knowledge, manners, or morals, I know nothing, but am not unwilling to think favorably of them all. His conduct to our President and his minister is not, however, a letter of recommendation of his temper, policy, or discretion. His lady was an intimate acquaintance of my daughter, and consequently well known to both my sons at

[1] "I inclose a few numbers of the Aurora. Shall we descend in a calm or a storm to our graves?" *B. Rush to J. A.*

[2] "We are told your son is gone to Petersburgh to put a torch to the flame of war, and that we are to be allies of France, and of all the powers on the Baltic, in it." *B. R. to J. A.*

Berlin. Thomas speaks handsomely of her person and accomplishments.

I have not seen, but am impatient to see, Mr. Cheetham's life of Mr. Paine. His political writings, I am singular enough to believe, have done more harm than his irreligious ones. He understood neither government nor religion. From a malignant heart he wrote virulent declamations, which the enthusiastic fury of the times intimidated all men, even Mr. Burke, from answering as he ought. His deism, as it appears to me, has promoted rather than retarded the cause of revolution in America, and indeed in Europe. His billingsgate, stolen from Blount's Oracles of Reason, from Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Bérenger, &c., will never discredit Christianity, which will hold its ground in some degree as long as human nature shall have any thing moral or intellectual left in it. The Christian religion, as I understand it, is the brightness of the glory and the express portrait of the character of the eternal, self-existent, independent, benevolent, all powerful and all merciful creator, preserver, and father of the universe, the first good, first perfect, and first fair. It will last as long as the world. Neither savage nor civilized man, without a revelation, could ever have discovered or invented it. Ask me not, then, whether I am a Catholic or Protestant, Calvinist or Arminian. As far as they are Christians, I wish to be a fellow-disciple with them all.

TO DAVID SEWALL.

Quincy, 29 January, 1811.

I have received your favor of the 24th, and it revived or restored many of the sensations of my youth.

The last trial before a special court of Vice-Admiralty in Boston, before the revolution, was of Ansell Nickerson for piracy and murder on the high seas.

The case was very singular and unaccountable. Nickerson took a passage on board a small vessel, and sailed from Boston for Cape Cod, with three or four other men. The next day, or next but one, the vessel was found with Nickerson alone on

board. All the other men had vanished. No blood or other marks of violence appeared. A sum of money of no great amount had been shipped on board by one of the other men, which was not found. It was suspected that Nickerson had murdered all the other men, for the sake of the money, but no money was found upon him, or hidden in the ship. Nickerson's character was unimpeachable and irreproachable in all his former life. His account was that a pirate came on board and pressed the men; but that he had leaped over the stern to avoid them, and hung there out of sight, by some thing, the technical term for which, in naval architecture, I have forgotten, till the pirates departed.

Nickerson was libelled in the Special Court of Vice-Admiralty by Jonathan Sewall, Advocate-General, who was aided by Sam. Fitch, if I remember rightly. There was no grand jury nor petit jury. I was of counsel for Nickerson, but was not engaged till the trial came on, when he requested the Court to appoint me. I did not move for any jury in this case. Josiah Quincy, the father of our foremost orator in Congress, was with me.

An act of parliament had provided for the erection of these special courts. They were to consist of fifteen judges, to be chosen out of the governors, lieutenant-governors, and counsellors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, the Judge of Admiralty, and the Commander-in-chief of the king's ships on this station. Admiral Montague sat upon this trial with Bernard, Wentworth, Hutchinson, Auchmuty, and others, counsellors from New Hampshire and Rhode Island, &c.

The man was acquitted; but I never knew upon what principle, nor by what majority of votes. The judges in that court did not, in any case that I was concerned in, give their opinions publicly and individually from the bench. They adjourned, consulted together in private, and authorized the president to pronounce the judgment of the court, which was done by Bernard, without informing what was the majority.

I suppose the want of direct evidence afforded room for a doubt in the minds of a majority.

Nickerson lived many years, and behaved well, and is living yet, for what I know.

In a former trial, that of Michael Corbet, and three other

sailors, for piracy, and murder of Lieutenant Panton, of the Rose frigate, I demanded juries, grand and petit, and drew a plea in writing for each of the four, demanding juries as a right. I almost killed myself by writing, night and day, four of those pleas of enormous length, in which a number of acts of parliament were recited at large.

These pleas, when they were read, appeared to make a great impression on the court, and even Hutchinson seemed to favor the idea of juries. But before any gentleman had time to speak, he moved an adjournment. The audience believed we should have juries, and Jonathan Sewall said he did not doubt it. But the court met in retirement, and the next morning the judgment of the court was pronounced, without informing us who, or whether any, dissented. Commodore Hood sat upon this trial, and behaved remarkably well. I do not remember that the evidence was reduced to writing by any authority, besides the minutes taken by the counsel and some of the judges.

Our classmate Farrar, of New Ipswich, must be remembered with Wheeler and Cushing. He made me a kind visit a few months before his death. Wentworth, Gardner, Sewall, Dalton, Whittemore, Adams, and Hemmenway, are all that remain; and these seven are a greater number, in proportion, than any other class has preserved. The melancholy news you give me of Dr. Hemmenway afflicts me very much. My affection for him, which began when we first entered college, has continued and increased till it is become veneration. The other six cannot long expect to survive Dr. Hemmenway. I rejoice to see in your handwriting a proof of the firmness of your health, and wish you as many days as you can make useful or agreeable, being your affectionate classmate and sincere friend.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Quincy, 9 February, 1811.

I have received with much pleasure your favor of the 29th of January. Before I proceed, let me premise a few preliminaries.

1. I disclaim all pretensions and thoughts of authority, superiority, or influence, arising from age, experience, or any thing else; and expect and desire and insist that you give no more attention or respect to any opinion of mine than if it were the opinion of the celebrated sexton of our church, Caleb Hayden.

2. That difference of opinion make no unnecessary alteration in private friendship. In the course of my life I have differed in sentiments, in religion and politics, from my master Putnam, and my master Gridley, and fifty others of my friends, without any diminution of esteem or regard. I have differed for many years in political sentiments from your grandfather, your uncle Samuel, your cousin Jonathan Sewall, Daniel Leonard, and some others, the most intimate friends I ever enjoyed, without the smallest personal altercation, and, I am bold to say, without a diminution of esteem on either side. I might enumerate a long catalogue of others in subsequent periods, but you will think you already have enough of my gossiping garrulity.

Now for your letter. When I applied the epithet "glorious" to the uncertainty of politics, I meant it ironically, as we say the "glorious uncertainty of the law." Those who smarted under the lash of the law probably applied it sarcastically to the lawyers, as the frogs said to the boys who pelted them, "It is sport to you, but death to us."

I ought not to object to your reverence for your fathers, as you call them, meaning, I presume, the government, and those concerned in the direction of public affairs; much less can I be displeased at your numbering me among them. But, to tell you a very great secret, as far as I am capable of comparing the merit of different periods, I have no reason to believe that we were better than you are. We had as many poor creatures and selfish beings, in proportion, among us as you have among you; nor were there then more enlightened men, or in greater number, in proportion, than there are now.

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate." "*Le grand rouleau en haut*," cannot be read by our telegraphic telescopes.

Should I let loose my imagination into futurity, I could imagine that I foresee changes and revolutions, such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard; changes in forms of government, changes in religion, changes in ecclesiastical establishments,

changes in armies and navies, changes in alliances and foreign relations, changes in commerce, &c., &c., &c., without end. I cannot see any better principle at present than to make as little innovation as possible; keep things going as well as we can in the present train.

The Union appears to me to be the rock of our salvation, and every reasonable measure for its preservation is expedient. Upon this principle, I own, I was pleased with the purchase of Louisiana, because, without it, we could never have secured and commanded the navigation of the Mississippi. The western country would infallibly have revolted from the Union. Those States would have united with England, or Spain, or France, or set up an independence, or done any thing else to obtain the free use of that river. I wish the Constitution had been more explicit, or that the States had been consulted; but it seems Congress have not entertained any doubts of their authority, and I cannot say that they are destitute of plausible arguments to support their opinion.

Your eloquence and oratory upon this question are worthy of your father, your grandfather, and your great grandfather. You spoke your own sentiments, I doubt not, with integrity, and the sense of a majority of your immediate constituents, and will not only increase your popularity with them, but extend your fame as a statesman and an orator; but will not influence at present the great body of the people in the nation.

Prophecies of division have been familiar in my ears for six-and-thirty years. They have been incessant, but have had no other effect than to increase the attachment of the people to the Union. However lightly we may think of the voice of the people sometimes, they not unfrequently see farther than you or I, in many great fundamental questions; and you may depend upon it, they see, in a partition of the Union, more danger to American liberty than poor Ames's distempered imagination conceived, and a total loss of independence for both fragments, or all the fragments, of the Union.

But I was about saying a word upon the Constitution. You appear to be fully convinced that the Convention had it not in contemplation to admit any State or States into our confederation, then situated without the limits of the thirteen States. In this point I am not so clear. The Constitution, it is true,

must speak for itself, and be interpreted by its own phraseology; yet the history and state of things at the time may be consulted to elucidate the meaning of words, and determine the *bonâ fide* intention of the Convention. Suppose we should admit, for argument's sake, that no member of the Convention foresaw the purchase of Louisiana! It will not follow that many of them did not foresee the necessity of conquering, some time or other, the Floridas and New Orleans, and other territories on this side of the Mississippi. The state of things between this country and Spain in 1787, was such as to render the apprehensions of a war with that power by no means improbable. The boundaries were not settled, the navigation of the river was threatened, and Spain was known to be tampering, and England too.

You think it impossible the Convention could have a thought of war with Great Britain, and the conquest of Canada. In this point I differ from you very widely. The conduct of Great Britain, and the conduct of our States, too, was such as to keep up very serious apprehensions between the two powers. The treaty of peace was not fulfilled on either side. The English had carried away the negroes, in direct violation of a most express stipulation; they held possession by strong garrisons of a long chain of posts within our territory, commanding many nations of Indians, among whom they excited dispositions hostile to us; the limits were not settled against Nova Scotia, and many turbulences between the inhabitants arose. On the other side the old debts were not paid, and positive laws existed in many, if not most, of the States, against their recovery. I therefore think it highly probable that the Convention meant to authorize Congress in future to admit Canada and Nova Scotia into the Union, in case we should have a war, and be obliged to conquer them by kindness or force.

As I love a freedom and boldness in debate, I was sorry to see the personalities against you and your constituents; yet I think Mr. Poindexter and others have offered arguments in answer to you of great weight. The precedent in the admission of Vermont I have not seen answered.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Quincy, 18 February, 1811.

I owe you thanks for your speech on place and patronage. The moral and patriotic sentiments are noble and exalted, the eloquence masterly, and the satire inimitable. There are not in Juvenal nor in Swift any images to be found more exquisitely ridiculous than the Charleston hack, and the treasury swill-trough and piggery. But are you right in supposing the rage for office more eager and craving now than it always has been, or more grasping and intriguing for executive offices than for legislative stations? Have you read many of the circular letters? Have you attended much to the course of elections, even in our New England town meetings?

General Joseph Warren was President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in 1775, and he often said that he never had till then any idea or suspicion of the selfishness of this people, or their impatient eagerness for commissions.

I will tell you none of my experiences during the eight years I was Vice-President, or the four following years; but there is no necessity for the same reserve when, in 1776 and 1777, I was president of the board of war, or, in less pompous phrase, chairman of the committee of war. In this capacity, all applications to Congress, to General Washington, and to the board, for commissions and promotions in the army, and for contracts, commissaryships, quartermasterships, &c., were committed to me. And I really think as much zeal appeared then as there has been seen since. Yet the military commissions were not very lucrative.

Again; are you right in imputing all this zeal to avarice? The ardor for commissions in the militia in New England, where no money is to be got, but much to be spent, is as intense as any ardor whatever. The post of clerk, sergeant, corporal, and even drummer and fifer, is coveted as earnestly as the best gift of major-general. There is no people on earth so ambitious as the people of America. The reason is, because the lowest can aspire as freely as the highest. The highest offices are as fair objects to the tradesman or farmer as to the lawyer, the priest, physician, or merchant. In other countries, none of those ranks

think of commissions. Employment and profit in their private occupations and pursuits is all they wish. Ambition and all its hopes are extinct.

But I have more serious objections to Mr. Macon's motion, as well as to your amendment. 1. Both the motion and the amendment would be ineffectual. If fathers, sons, and brothers were proscribed, there would be the same zeal and exertions for cousins first, second, third, and fourth, and for grandfathers, and grandsons, and uncles, and, what is oftener a stimulus than any of these relations, for friends who have been or will be active agents and instruments in promoting the member's interest among his constituents, and procuring him votes. This is the great spring of all in the minds of senators and representatives, to obtain favors for favorites among their constituents, in order to attach them by gratitude and establish their own influence at home and abroad. No law, no constitution that human wit or wisdom can devise, can ever prevent senators or representatives from soliciting offices and favors for their friends.

2. Both the motion and amendment appear to me unconstitutional. The President has, or ought to have, the whole nation before him, and he ought to select the men best qualified and most meritorious for offices at his own responsibility, without being shackled by any check by law, constitution, or institution. Without this unrestrained liberty, he is not a check upon the legislative power nor either branch of it. Indeed, he must be the slave of the party that brought him in. He never can be independent or impartial.

3. Both the motion and amendment are in the pure spirit of aristocracy. Neither Mr. Macon nor yourself considered it in that light; but it is exactly in the temper and spirit of all corps of nobility, jealous of the power of the executive, since the creation. This jealousy is often actuated by the purest spirit of patriotism, and the most perfect integrity, but if it is not checked and controlled, it never has ceased to encroach, until it has made the executive a mere head of wood, and drawn all the power and resources of the nation into the insatiable gulf, the irresistible vortex, of an aristocracy or an oligarchy.

TO BENJAMIN RUSH.

Quincy, 28 August, 1811.

Your letter of the 20th, my dear friend, has filled my eyes with tears, and, indurated stoic as I am, my heart with sensations unutterable by my tongue or pen; not the feelings of vanity, but the overwhelming sense of my own unworthiness of such a panegyric from such a friend. Like Louis the sixteenth, I said to myself, "*Qu'est ce que j'ai fait pour le mériter?*

Have I not been employed in mischief all my days? Did not the American revolution produce the French revolution? And did not the French revolution produce all the calamities and desolations to the human race and the whole globe ever since? I meant well, however. My conscience was clear as a crystal glass, without a scruple or a doubt. I was borne along by an irresistible sense of duty. God prospered our labors; and, awful, dreadful, and deplorable as the consequences have been, I cannot but hope that the ultimate good of the world, of the human race, and of our beloved country, is intended and will be accomplished by it. While I was in this reverie, I handed your letter to my brother Cranch, the postmaster, of eighty-five years of age, an Israelite indeed, who read it with great attention, and at length started up and exclaimed, "I have known you sixty years, and I can bear testimony as a witness to every word your friend has said in this letter in your favor." This completed my humiliation and confusion.

Your letter is the most serious and solemn one I ever received in my life. It has aroused and harrowed up my soul. I know not what to say in answer to it, or to do in consequence of it.

It is most certain that the end of my life cannot be remote. My eyes are constantly fixed upon it, according to the precept or advice of the ancient philosopher; and, if I am not in a total delusion, I daily behold and contemplate it without dismay.

If by dedicating all the rest of my days to the composition of such an address as you propose,[1] I could have any rational

[1] "Suppose you avail yourself, while in health, of the sensibility which awaits the public mind to your character soon after your death, by leaving behind you a posthumous address to the citizens of the United States, in which shall be inculcated all those great national, social, domestic, and religious virtues, which alone can make a people free, great, and happy." *B. Rush to J. A.*

assurance of doing any real good to my fellow-citizens of United America, I would cheerfully lay aside all other occupations and amusements, and devote myself to it. But there are difficulties and embarrassments in the way, which to me, at present, appear insuperable.

The "sensibility of the public mind," which you anticipate at my decease, will not be so favorable to my memory as you seem to foresee. By the treatment I have received, and continue to receive, I should expect that a large majority of all parties would cordially rejoice to hear that my head was laid low.

I am surprised to read your opinion, that "my integrity has never been called in question, and that friends and enemies agree in believing me to be an honest man."[1] If I am to judge by the newspapers and pamphlets that have been printed in America for twenty years past, I should think that both parties believed me the meanest villain in the world.

If they should not suspect me of sinning in the grave, they will charge me with selfishness and hypocrisy before my death, in preparing an address to move the passions of the people, and excite them to promote my children, and perhaps to make my son a king. Washington and Franklin could never do any thing but what was imputed to pure, disinterested patriotism; I never could do any thing but what was ascribed to sinister motives.

I agree with you in sentiment, that religion and virtue are the only foundations, not only of republicanism and of all free government, but of social felicity under all governments and in all the combinations of human society. But if I should inculcate this doctrine in my will, I should be charged with hypocrisy and a desire to conciliate the good will of the clergy towards my family, as I was charged by Dr. Priestley and his friend Cooper, and by Quakers, Baptists, and I know not how many other sects, for instituting a national fast, for even common civility to the clergy, and for being a church-going animal.

If I should inculcate those "national, social, domestic, and religious virtues" you recommend, I should be suspected and

[1] "You stand nearly alone in the history of our public men, in never having had your *integrity* called in question, or even suspected. Friends and enemies agree in believing you to be an honest man." *B. Rush to J. A.*

charged with an hypocritical, machiavelian, jesuitical, pharisaical attempt to promote a national establishment of Presbyterianism in America; whereas I would as soon establish the Episcopal Church, and almost as soon the Catholic Church.

If I should inculcate "fidelity to the marriage bed," it would be said that it proceeded from resentment to General Hamilton, and a malicious desire to hold up to posterity his libertinism. Others would say that it is only a vainglorious ostentation of my own continence. For among all the errors, follies, failings, vices, and crimes, which have been so plentifully imputed to me, I cannot recollect a single insinuation against me of any amorous intrigue, or irregular or immoral connection with woman, single or married, myself a bachelor or a married man.*

If I should recommend the sanctification of the sabbath, like a divine, or even only a regular attendance on public worship, as a means of moral instruction and social improvement, like a philosopher or statesman, I should be charged with vain ostentation again, and a selfish desire to revive the remembrance of my own punctuality in this respect; for it is notorious enough that I have been a church-going animal[1] for seventy-six years, from the cradle. And this has been alleged as one proof of my hypocrisy.

Fifty-three years ago I was fired with a zeal, amounting to enthusiasm, against ardent spirits,[2] the multiplication of taverns, retailers, and dram-shops, and tippling houses. Grieved to the heart to see the number of idlers, thieves, sots, and consumptive patients made for the physicians, in those infamous seminaries, I applied to the Court of Sessions, procured a committee of inspection and inquiry, reduced the number of licensed houses, &c. But I only acquired the reputation of a hypocrite and an ambitious demagogue by it. The number of licensed houses was soon reinstated; drams, grog, and sotting were not diminished, and remain to this day as deplorable as ever. You may

* Note. August 31, 1811. I had forgot the story of the four English girls whom General Pinckney was employed to hire in England, two for me and two for himself. *J. A.*

[1] "Recollect here your definition of a New England man, given to one of your friends in Amsterdam. It was, 'He is a meeting-going animal.'" *B. Rush to J. A.*

[2] "Much may be said to discourage the use of ardent spirits, and to lessen the number of taverns and grocery stores, both of which are sapping the virtue of our country." *B. Rush to J. A.*

as well preach to the Indians against rum as to our people. Little Turtle petitioned me to prohibit rum to be sold to his nation, for a very good reason; because he said I had lost three thousand of my Indian children in his nation in one year by it. Sermons, moral discourses, philosophical dissertations, medical advice, are all lost upon this subject. Nothing but making the commodity scarce and dear will have any effect; and your republican friend, and, I had almost said, mine, Jefferson, would not permit rum or whiskey to be taxed.

If I should then in my will, my dying legacy, my posthumous exhortation, call it what you will, recommend heavy, prohibitory taxes upon spirituous liquors, which I believe to be the only remedy against their deleterious qualities in society, every one of your brother republicans and nine tenths of the federalists would say that I was a canting Puritan, a profound hypocrite, setting up standards of morality, frugality, economy, temperance, simplicity, and sobriety, that I knew the age was incapable of.

Funds and banks[1] I never approved, or was satisfied with our funding system; it was founded in no consistent principle; it was contrived to enrich particular individuals at the public expense. Our whole banking system I ever abhorred, I continue to abhor, and shall die abhorring.

But I am not an enemy to funding systems. They are absolutely and indispensably necessary in the present state of the world. An attempt to annihilate or prevent them would be as romantic an adventure as any in Don Quixote or in Oberon. A national bank of deposit I believe to be wise, just, prudent, economical, and necessary. But every bank of discount, every bank by which interest is to be paid or profit of any kind made by the deponent, is downright corruption. It is taxing the public for the benefit and profit of individuals; it is worse than old tenor, continental currency, or any other paper money.

Now, Sir, if I should talk in this strain, after I am dead, you know the people of America would pronounce that I had died mad.

My opinion is, that a circulating medium of gold and silver only ought to be introduced and established; that a national

[1] "In exposing the evils of funding systems and banks, summon all the fire of your genius, as it blazed forth on the 2d of July in the year 1776 upon the floor of Congress." *B. Rush to J. A.*

bank of deposit only, with a branch in each State, should be allowed; that every bank in the Union ought to be annihilated, and every bank of discount prohibited to all eternity. Not one farthing of profit should ever be allowed on any money deposited in the bank. Now, my friend, if, in my posthumous sermon, exhortation, advice, address, or whatever you may call it, I should gravely deliver such a doctrine, nine tenths of republicans as well as federalists will think that I ought to have been consigned to your tranquillizing chair rather than permitted to write such extravagances. Franklin, Washington, Hamilton, and all our disinterested patriots and heroes, it will be said, have sanctioned paper money and banks, and who is this pedant and bigot of a John Adams, who, from the ground, sounds the tocsin against all our best men, when every body knows he never had any thing in view but his private interest from his birth to his death?

Free schools, and all schools, colleges, academies and seminaries of learning,[1] I can recommend from my heart; but I dare not say that a suffrage should never be permitted to a man who cannot read and write. What would become of the republic of France, if the lives, fortunes, character, of twenty-four millions and a half of men who can neither read nor write, should be at the absolute disposal of five hundred thousand who can read?

I am not qualified to write such an address. The style should be pure, elegant, eloquent, and pathetic in the highest degree. It should be revised, corrected, obliterated, interpolated, amended, transcribed twenty times, polished, refined, varnished, burnished. To all these employments and exercises I am a total stranger. To my sorrow, I have never copied, nor corrected, nor embellished. I understand it not. I never could write declamations, orations, or popular addresses.

If I could persuade my friend Rush, or my friend Jay, my friend Trumbull, or my friend Humphreys, or perhaps my friend Jefferson, to write such a thing for me, I know not why I might not transcribe it, as Washington did so often. Borrowed eloquence, if it contains as good stuff, is as good as own eloquence.

The example you recollect of Cæsar's will, is an awful warn-

[1] "The benefits of free schools should not be overlooked. Indeed, suffrage, in my opinion, should never be permitted to a man that could not write or read." *B. R. to J. A.*

ing. Posthumous addresses may be left by Cæsar as well as Cato, Brutus, or Cicero, and will oftener, perhaps, be applauded, and make deeper impressions; establish empires easier than restore republics; promote tyranny sooner than liberty.

Your advice, my friend, flows from the piety, benevolence, and patriotism of your heart. I know of no man better qualified to write such an address than yourself. If you will try your hand at it and send me the result, I will consider it maturely. I will not promise to adopt it as my own, but I may make a better use of it than of any thing I could write.

My brother Cranch thinks you one of the best and one of the profoundest Christians. He prays me to present you his best compliments, and although he has not the honor nor the pleasure of a personal acquaintance, has the highest esteem for your character. He prays me to inclose a sermon, not for its own sake as much as for the appendix, which he asks you to read and give him your opinion of it. Will you show it to our friend Wharton, and get his opinion of it?

APPENDIX.

A.

(Page 346.)

THE paper by Joseph Hawley, drawn up in accordance with the intention expressed in the text, was first printed in Niles's *Principles and Acts of the Revolution*, with the following brief explanation from Mr. Adams: —

"This is the original paper that I read to Patrick Henry in the fall of the year 1774, which produced his rapturous burst of approbation, and solemn asseveration, 'I am of that man's mind.'"

"BROKEN HINTS,

To be communicated to the Committee of Congress for the Massachusetts.

We must fight, if we cannot otherwise rid ourselves of British taxation, all revenues, and the constitution or form of government enacted for us by the British parliament. It is evil against right — utterly intolerable to every man who has any idea or feeling of right or liberty.

It is easy to demonstrate, that the regulation act will soon annihilate every thing of value in the charter, introduce perfect despotism, and render the House of Representatives a mere form and ministerial engine.

It is *now* or never, that we must assert our liberty. Twenty years will make the number of tories on this continent equal to the number of whigs. They who shall be born will not have any idea of a free government.

It will necessarily be a question, whether the new government of this province shall be suffered to take place at all, or whether it shall be immediately withstood and resisted.

A most important question this — I humbly conceive it not best, forcibly or wholly to resist it immediately.

There is not heat enough yet for battle. Constant, and a sort of negative resistance of government, will increase the heat and blow the fire. There is not military skill enough. That is improving, and must be encouraged and improved, but will daily increase.

Fight we must finally, unless Britain retreats.

But it is of infinite consequence that victory be the end and issue of hostilities. If we get to fighting before necessary dispositions are made for it, we shall be conquered, and all will be lost forever.

A certain clear plan, for a constant, adequate, and lasting supply of arms and military stores, must be devised and fully contemplated. This is the main

thing. This, I think, ought to be a capital branch of the business of Congress — to wit; to devise and settle such a plan; at least, clearly to investigate how such supplies can be extensively had in case of need. While this is effecting — to wit; while the continent is providing themselves with arms and military stores, and establishing a method for a sure and unfailing and constant supply, I conceive we had best to negotiate with Britain. If she will cede our rights and restore our liberties, all is well — every good man will rejoice; if she will not agree to relinquish and abolish all American revenues, under every pretence and name, and all pretensions to order and regulate our internal policy and constitution — then, if we have got any constant and sufficient supply of military stores, it will be time to take to arms. I cannot quit this head. It ought to be immediately and most seriously attended to. It cannot be any other than madness to commence hostilities before we have established resources on a sure plan for certain and effectual military supplies. Men, in that case, will not be wanting.

But what considerate man will ever consent to take arms and go to war, where he has no reasonable assurance but that all must be given over, and he fall a prey to the enemy, for want of military stores and ammunition, in a few weeks?

Either an effectual non-consumption agreement or resistance of the new government will bring on hostilities very soon.

1. As to a non-consumption agreement, it appears to me that it ought to be taken for certain truth, that no plan of importation or consumption of tea, British goods in general, or enumerated articles, which is to rest and depend on the virtue of all the individuals, will succeed; but must certainly prove abortive.

The ministry may justly call such a plan futile; futile it will turn out. A plan of that sort may safely rest and be founded on the virtue of the majority; but then the majority, by the plan, must be directed to control the minority, which implies force. The plan, therefore, must direct and prescribe how that force shall be exercised.

Those, again, who exercise that force, under the direction and by order of the majority, must by that majority be defended and indemnified.

Dispositions must therefore necessarily be made to resist or overcome that force which will be brought against you, which will directly produce war and bloodshed.

From thence it follows, that any other non-consumption or non-importation plan, which is not perfectly futile and ridiculous, implies hostilities and war.

2. As to the resistance of the new government, that also implies war; for, in order to resist and prevent the effect of the new government, it is indispensably necessary that the charter government, or some other, must be maintained, constitutionally exercised and supported.

The people will have some government or other; they will be drawn in by a seeming mild and just administration, which will last awhile. Legislation and executive justice must go on in some form or other, and we may depend on it they will; therefore the new government will take effect until the old is restored.

The old cannot be restored until the council take on them the administration, call assemblies, constitute courts, make sheriffs, &c. The council will not attempt this without good assurance of protection. This protection cannot be given without hostilities.

Our salvation depends upon an established persevering union of the colonies.

The tools of administration are using every device and effort to destroy that union, and they will certainly continue so to do.

Thereupon all possible devices and endeavors must be used to establish, improve, brighten, and maintain such union.

Every grievance of any one colony must be held and considered by the whole as a grievance to the whole, and must operate on the whole as a grievance to the whole. This will be a difficult matter to effect, but it must be done.

Quære, therefore, whether it is not absolutely necessary that some plan be settled for a continuation of congresses? But here we must be aware that congresses will soon be declared and enacted by parliament to be high treason.

Is the India company to be compensated or not?

If to be compensated, each colony to pay the particular damage she has done, or is an average to be made on the continent?

The destruction of the tea was not unjust; therefore to what good purpose is the tea to be paid for, unless we are assured that, by so doing, our rights will be restored and peace obtained?

What future measures is the continent to preserve with regard to imported dutied tea, whether it comes as East India property or otherwise, under the pretence and lie that the tea is imported from Holland, and the goods imported before a certain given day? Dutied tea will be imported and consumed, goods continue to be imported, your non-importation agreement eluded, rendered contemptible and ridiculous, unless all teas used, and all goods, are taken into some public custody which will be inviolably faithful."

END OF VOLUME IX.

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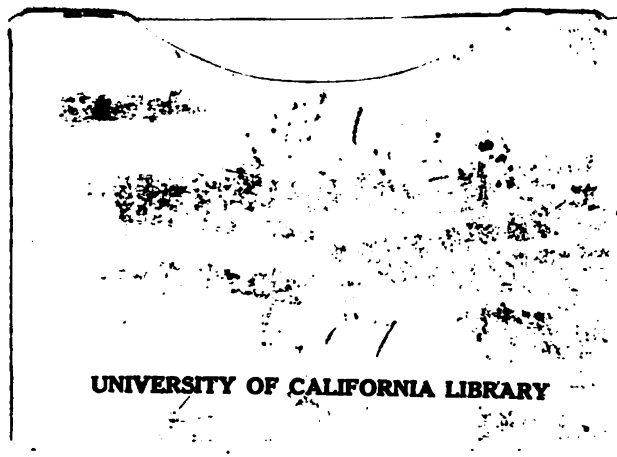
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